

Introduction

For those of you who thought the comic strip was dead by the end of the twentieth century, here are 292 pieces of proof that you were wrong. Mark Beyer was breathing delirious, heartbreaking, otherworldly life into it by means of *Amy and Jordan*. Obviously, you weren't reading *New York Press*.

But I sure was. Voraciously. Back in 1989, when I discovered that Bever's strips were appearing regularly in this new "alternative weekly" paper, I quickly became hooked, and a thought seized me: I had to clip and save them-they were exquisite poems of urban despair, dreamy and nightmarish. I was already a fan of Beyer's talent based on his book Agony (Pantheon, 1988), but these new strips revealed, week by week, a whole new dimension to his work-an ingenious reinvention of panel-design that redefined what a comic strip could be. As with Peanuts, it helps to try and picture these in the context which they first appeared in order to appreciate just how profoundly they emerged from anything else on the newspaper page. Even the "outré" NYP ads and listings which often ran alongside them were hopelessly dull by comparison. One of its most impressive aspects was the way Form served the Content-no matter how eccentric the layout got, it somehow never confused the narrative. And what narrative: it was as if Candide had been transported to the East Village and split in two like an amoeba and holed up in a squat on Avenue C. Along with giant bugs from outer space.

So I did clip and save them, and put them into an envelope, which was then placed in a shoebox with a lot of other envelopes (receipts, receipts!), which was shoved to the back of the closet of my sixth-floor walk-up studio apartment, which I moved out of three years later and in the process I unwittingly threw them all away. Which frankly is just the sort of thing that Amy and Jordan would do. Drat. "Oh well," I thought, once I'd realized it, "at some point someone will collect and publish them, and I'll get them back that way." And that was that.

Fast forward more than ten years, to the spring of 2002. During a panel of cartoonists I was chairing in Philadelphia, a member of the audience asked what Mark was working on and where he was. No one seemed to know. The discussion was transcribed and published in *The Comics Journal* that summer, and in the fall Mark contacted me with the best possible news: He'd read the panel transcript and wanted to publish again. And the *Amy and Jordan* strips had never been comprehensively collected. So now, as an editor, I was able to grant my own wish.

Amy and Jordan ran from 1988 through early 1996. After that, Beyer put cartooning aside to pursue other projects. This book signeds his return to the realm of comics, which he says he wants to start making again. We can only hope he does. For now, I'm just thankful I finally have my Amy and Jordan collection back.

—Chip Kidd New York City, October 2005 Copyright @ 2004 by Mark Beyer Introduction @ 2004 by Chip Kidd

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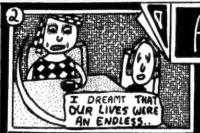
The material in this work previously appeared in L.A. Weekly , the New York Press , and San Diego Reader.

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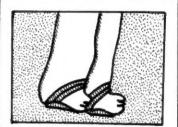
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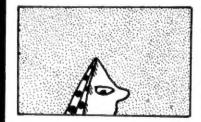




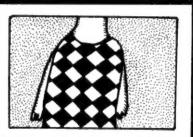






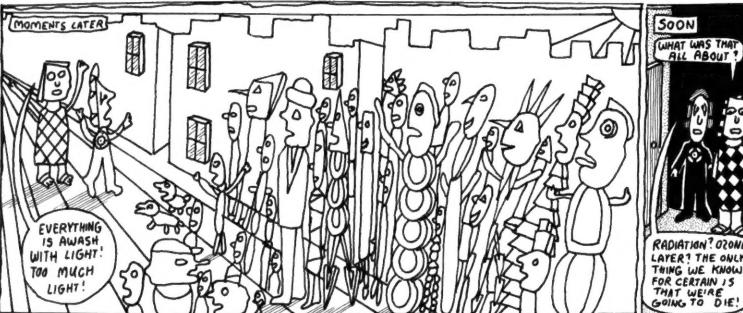












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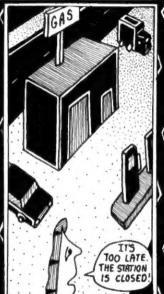
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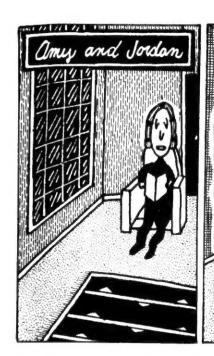




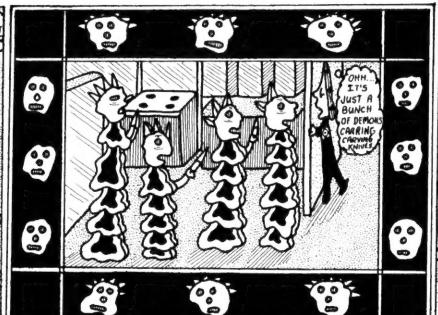


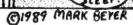


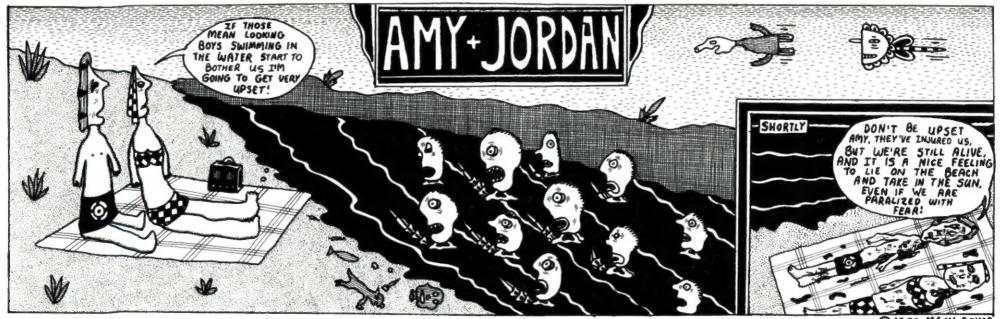




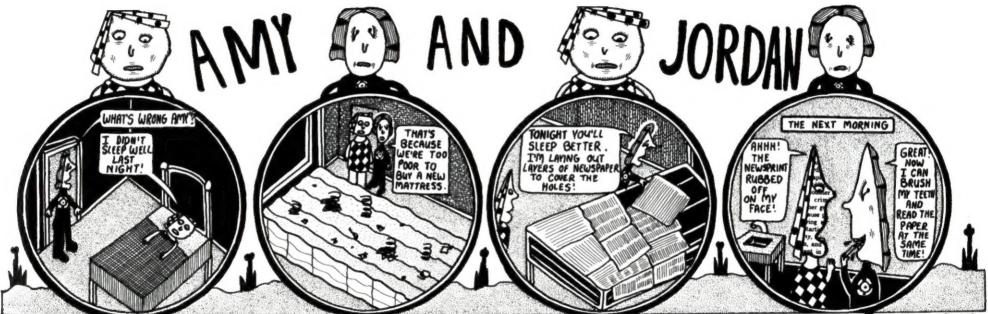






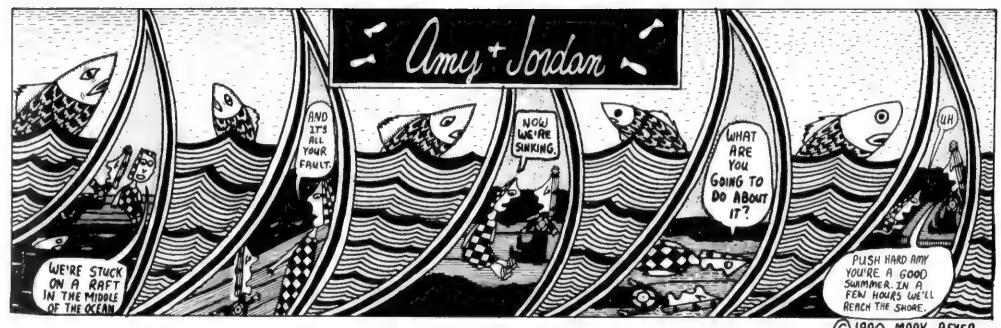


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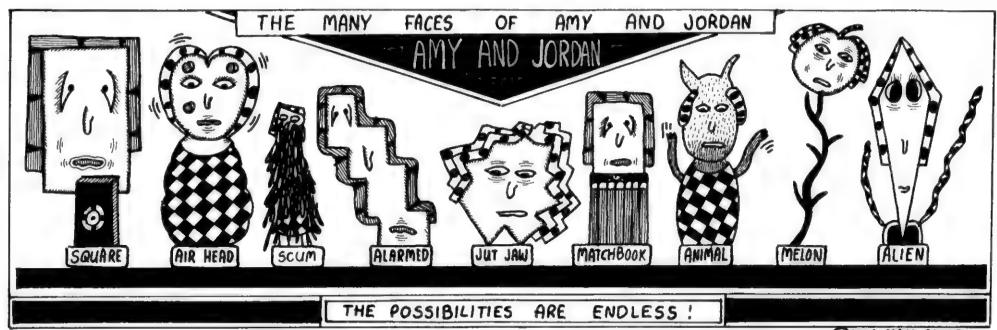




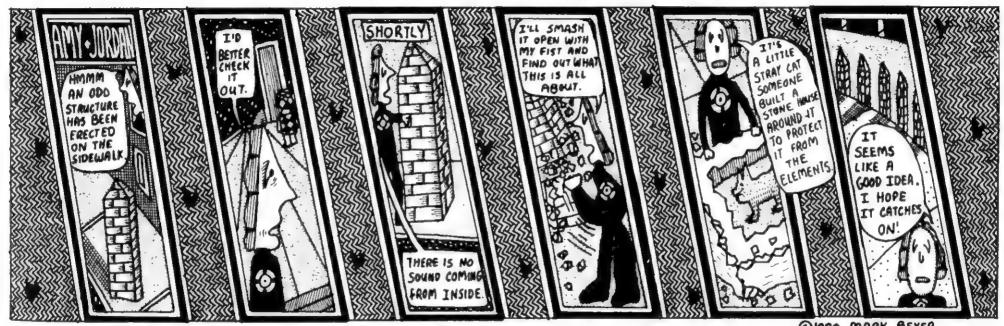
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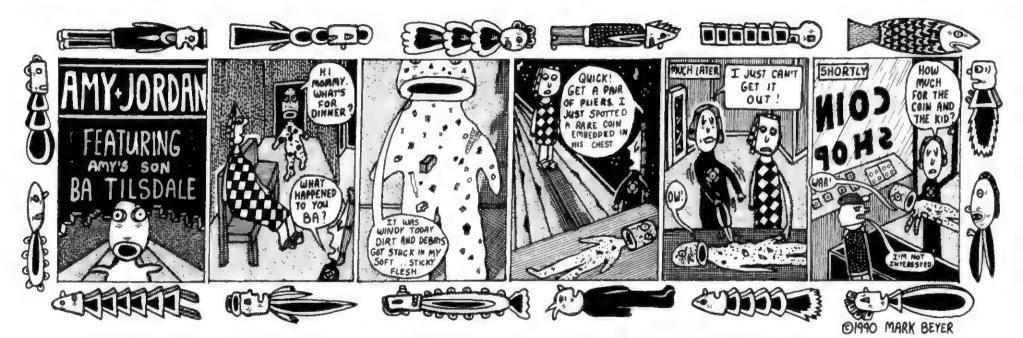
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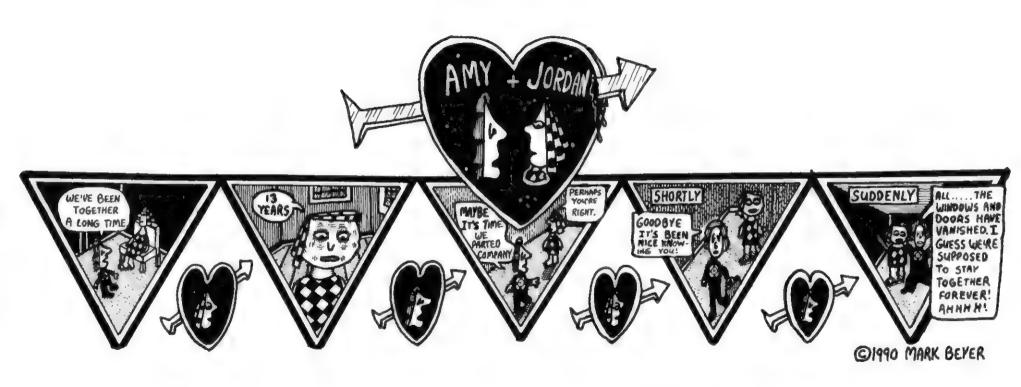
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Thursday, 2:00 A.M. awoke from a terrible dream: Hideous tar creatures were slithering down anonymous suburban streets covering everything with a thick greasy coating of rancid black slime.



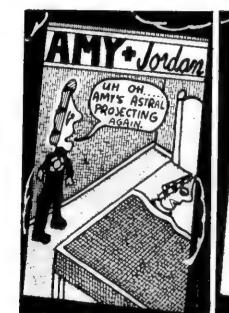
car with Amy..we felt confident we could watch this awful spectacle in relative safety, but we forgot about the insects hiding in the glove compartment. They clamp down hard upon our jaws, sealing our lips.



Utilizing our newfound powers of mind control we disintegrate the insects, pulverizing their bodies into dust.



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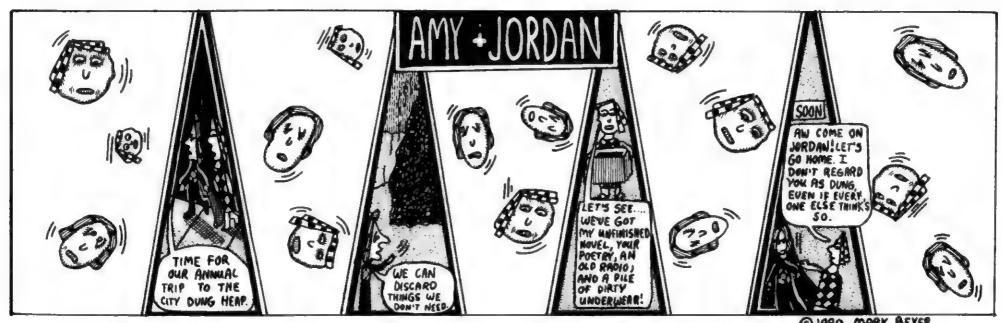




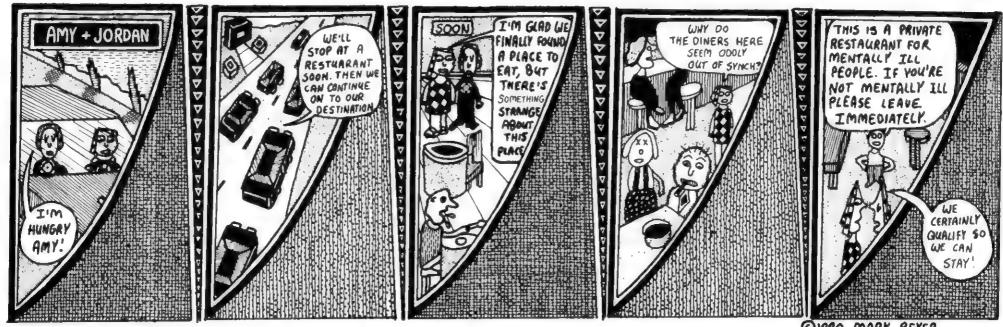




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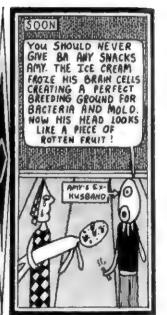




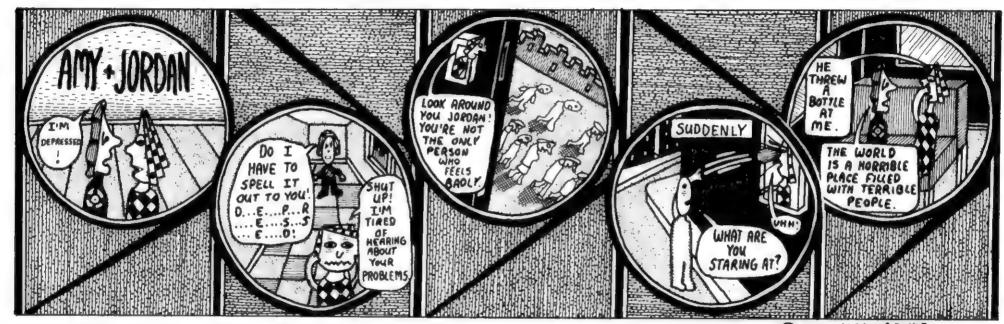




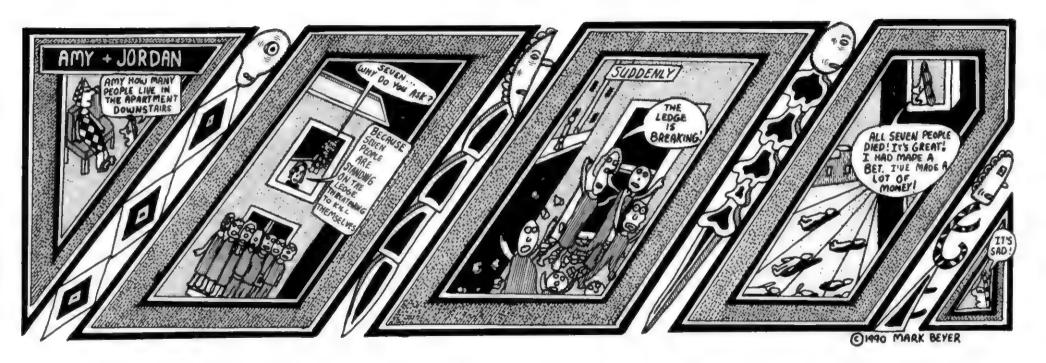


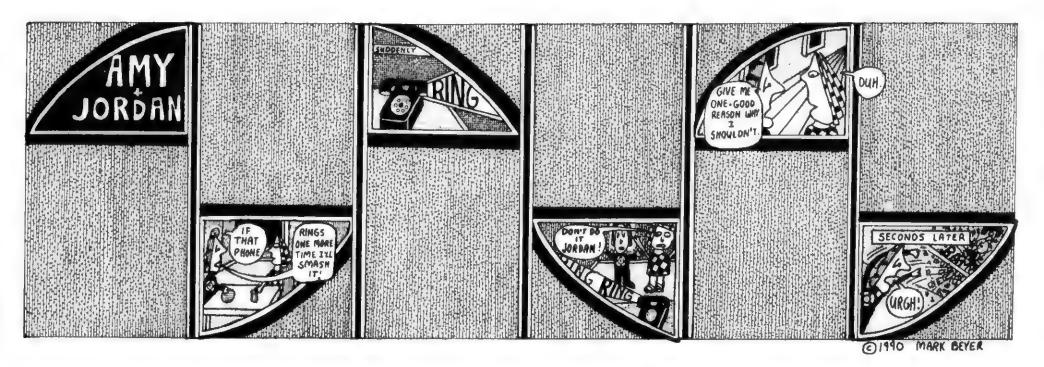


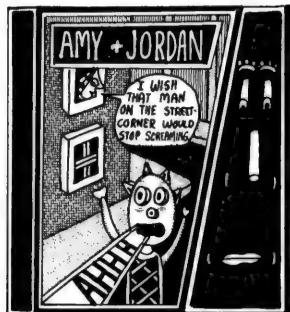
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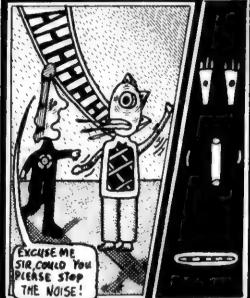
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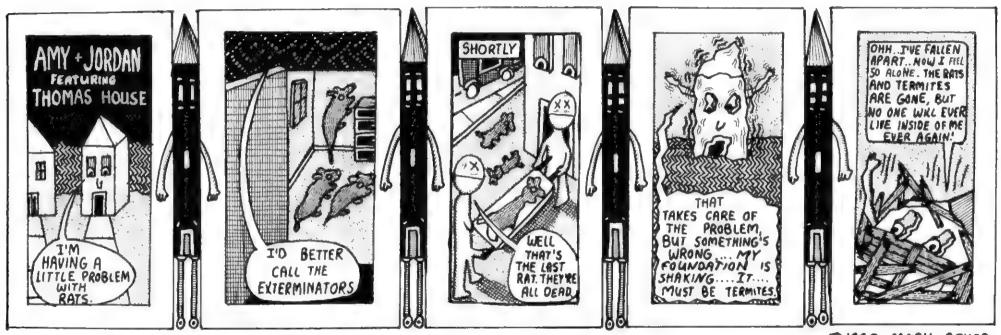




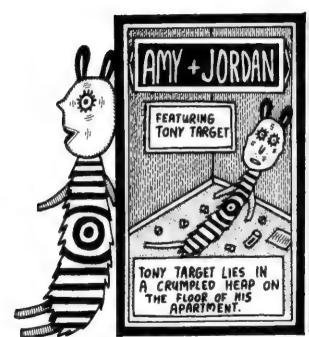




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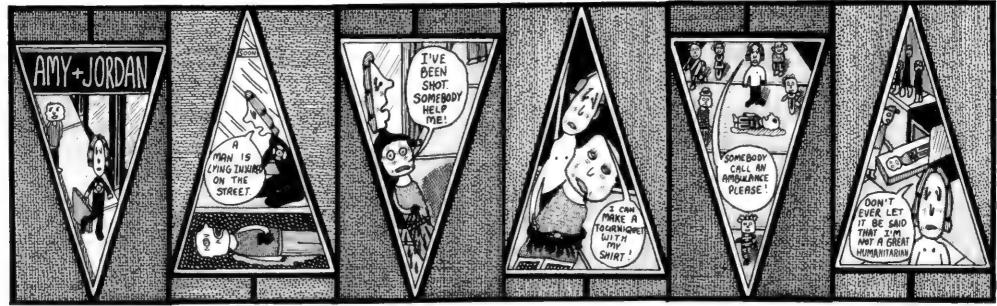
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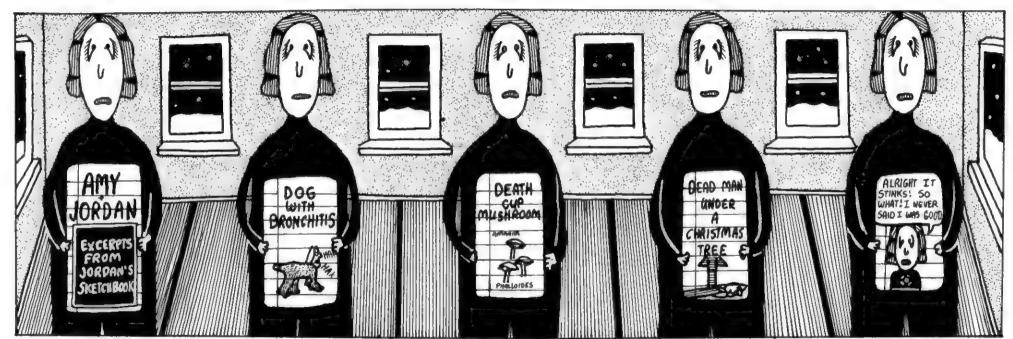








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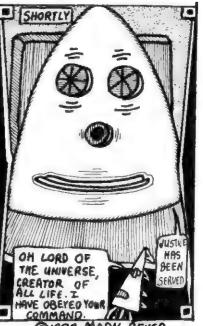
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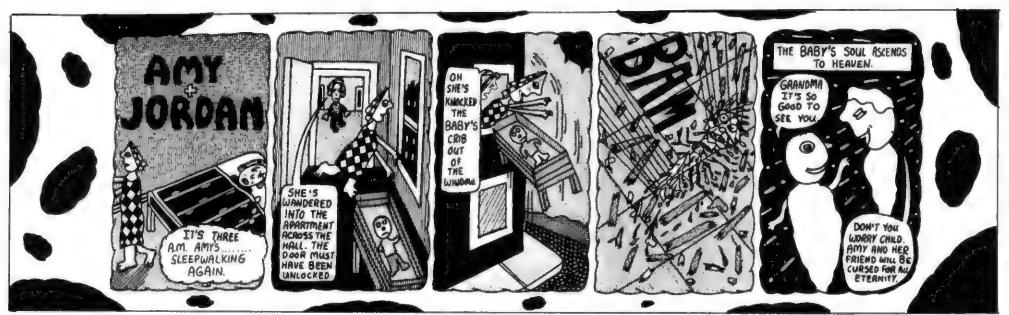


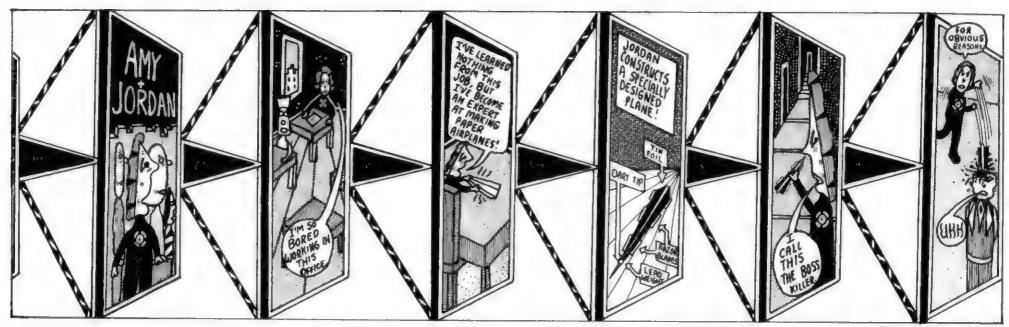




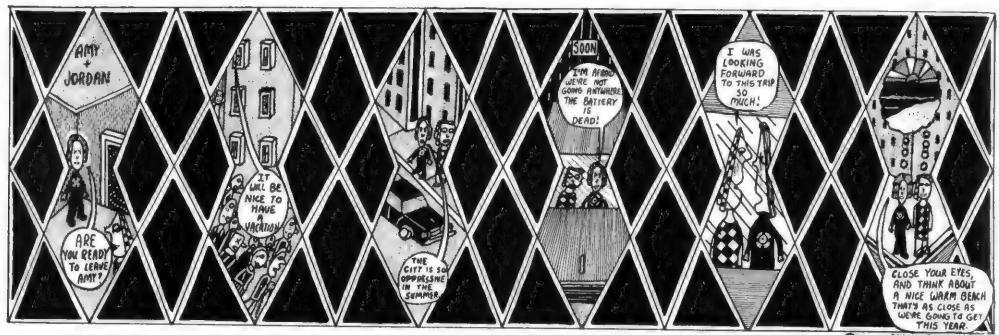


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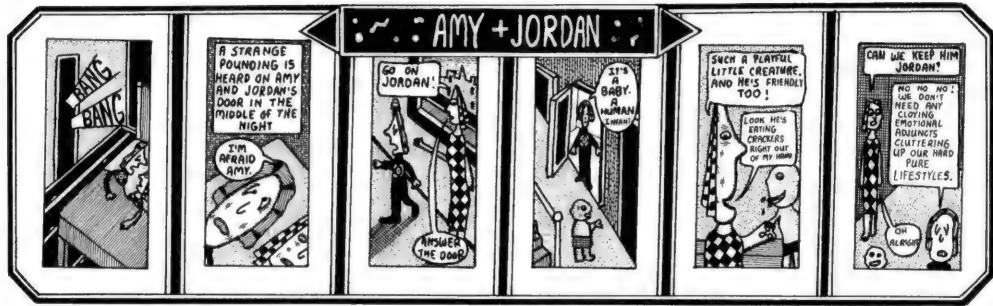




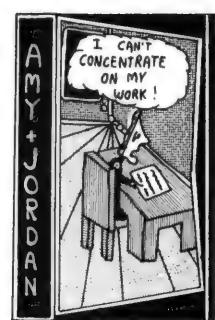
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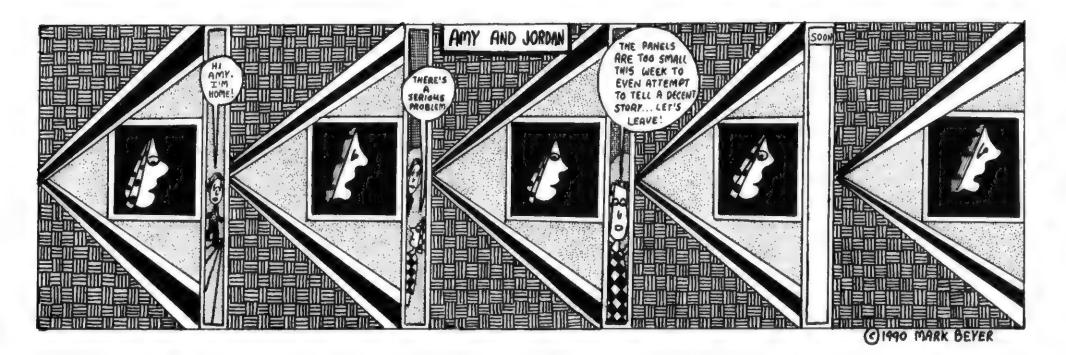


























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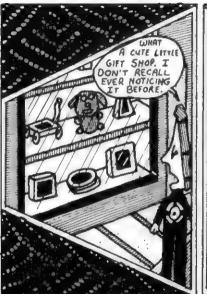






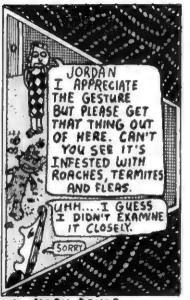












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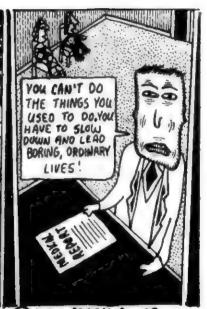




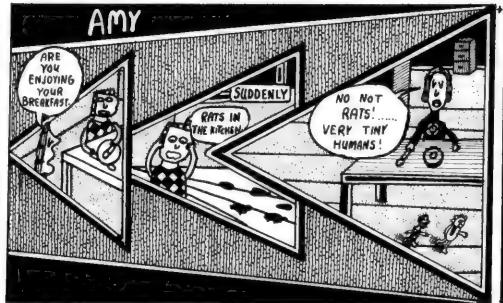


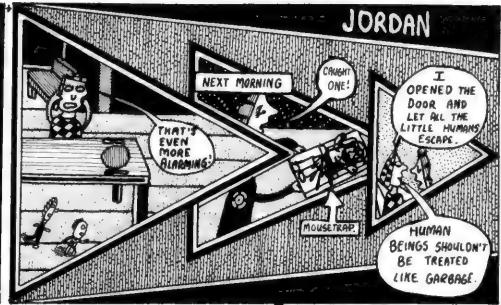






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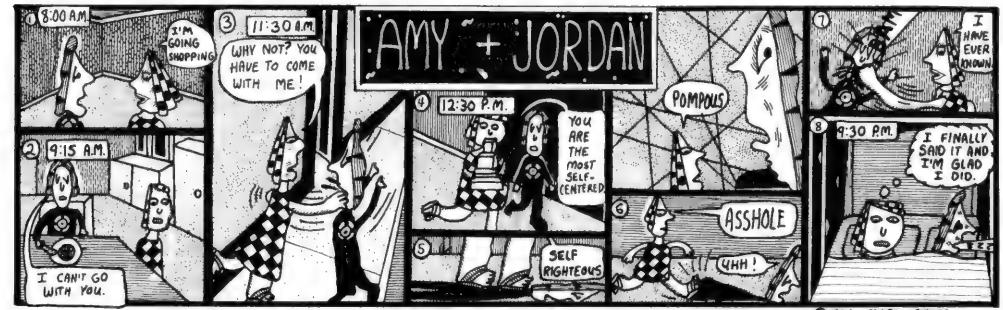




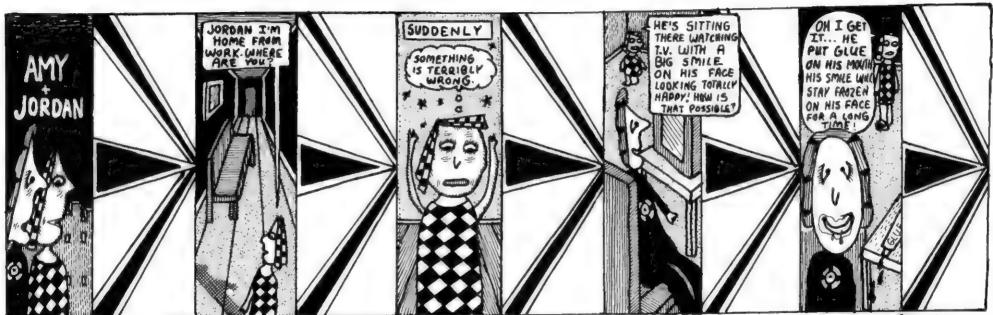
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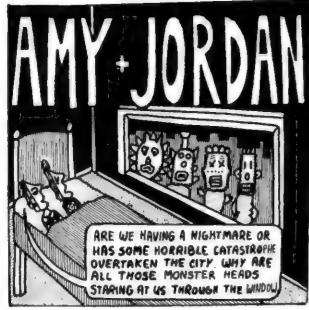


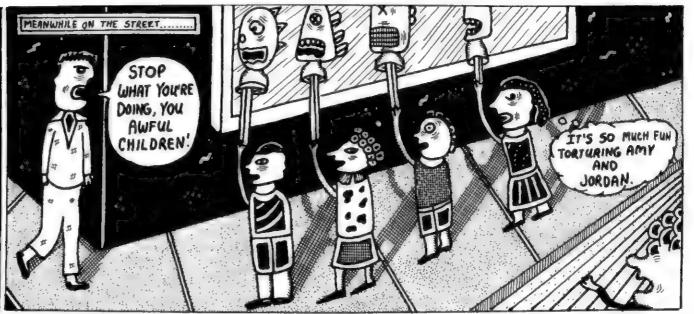
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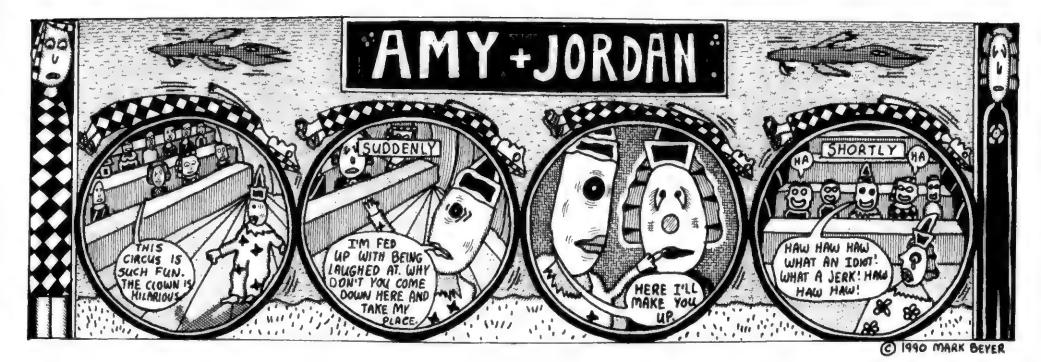
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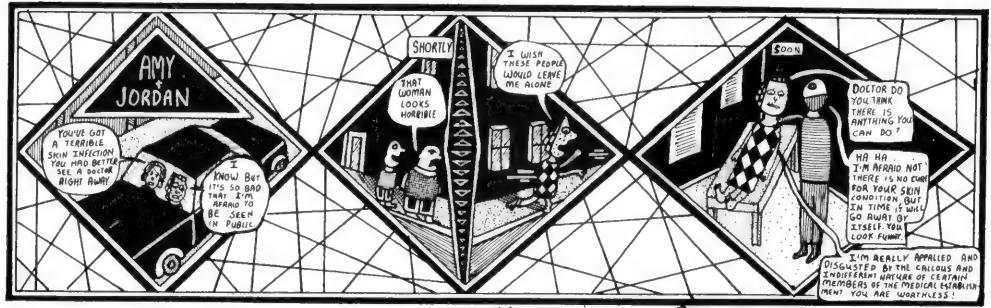
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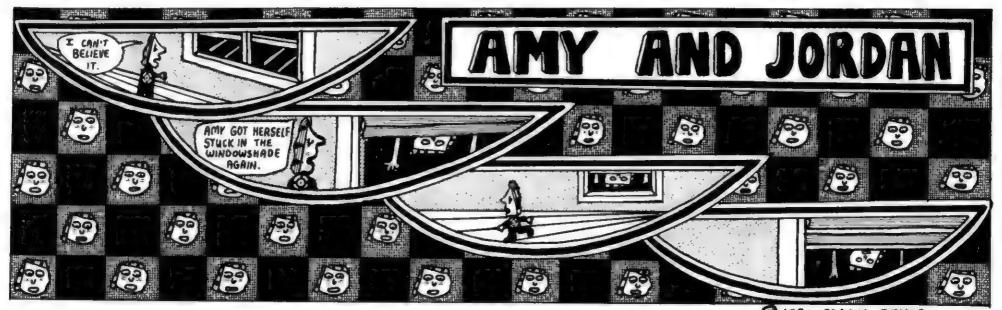
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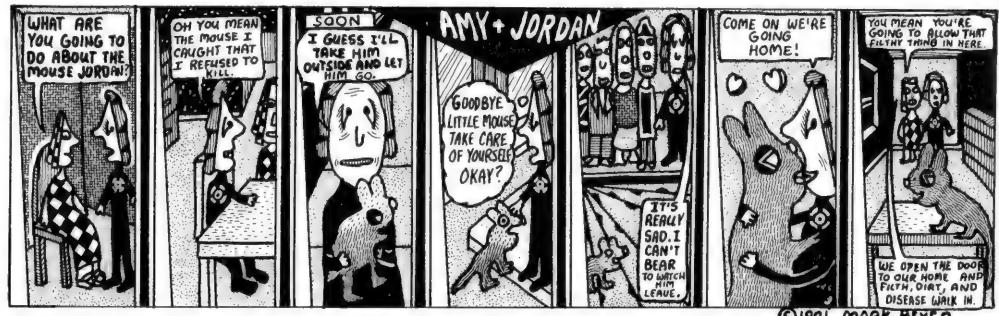








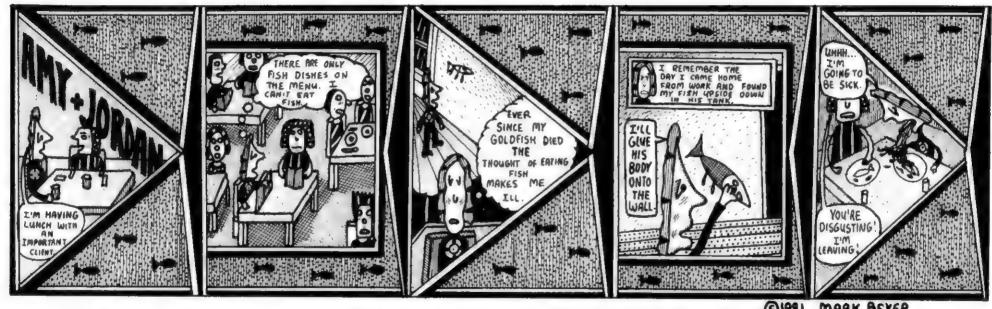
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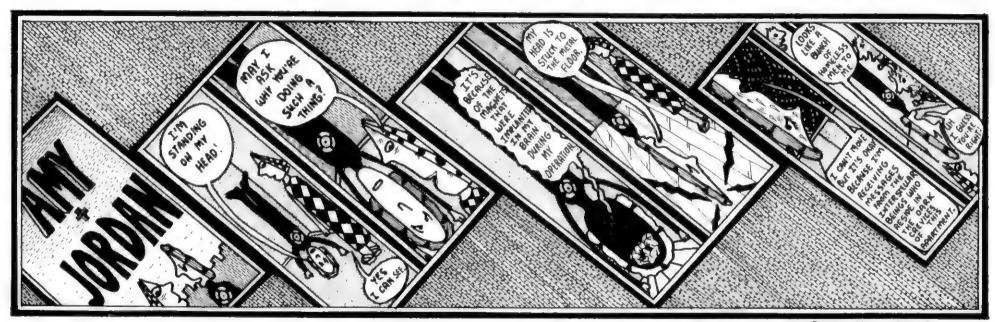
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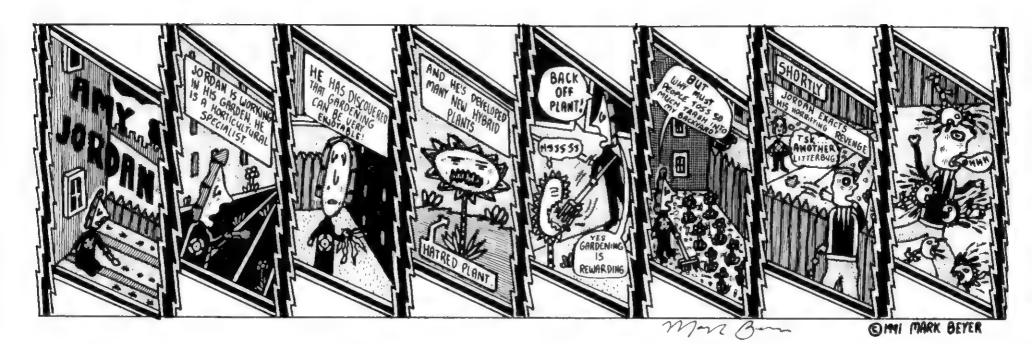




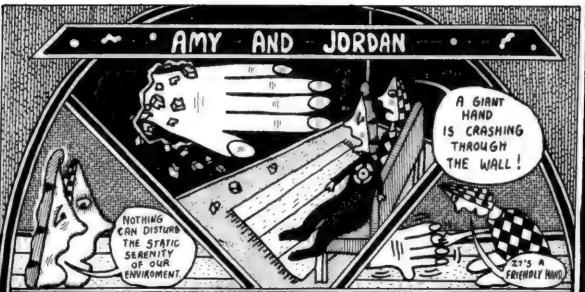
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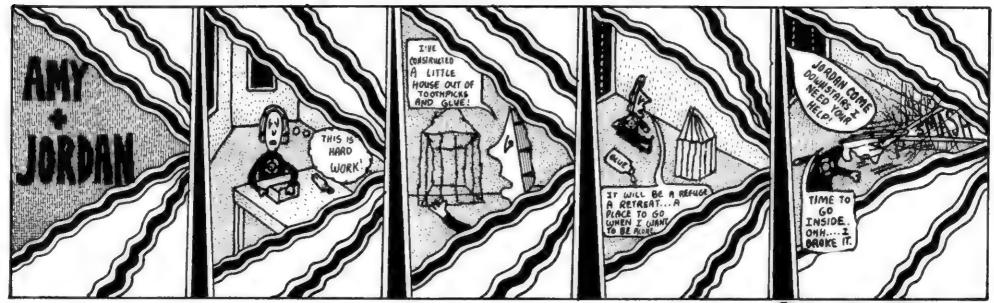






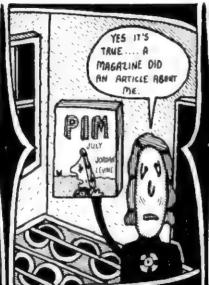
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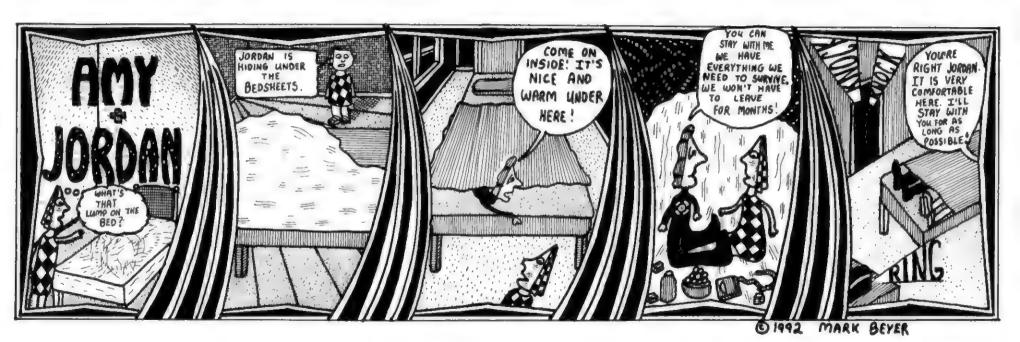


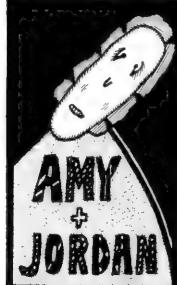




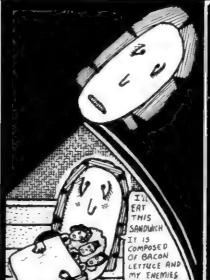


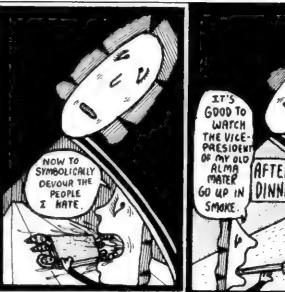
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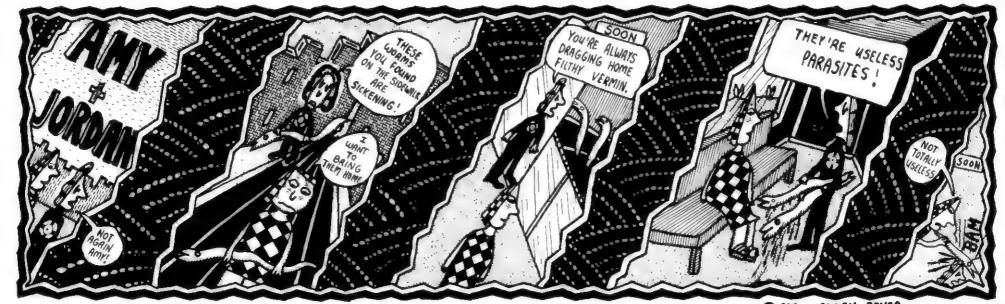




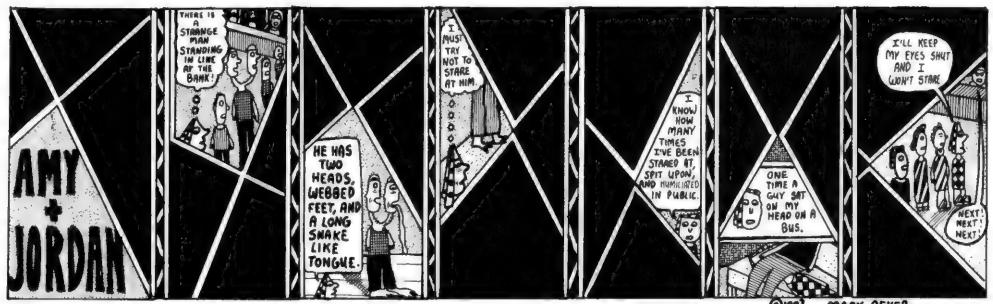


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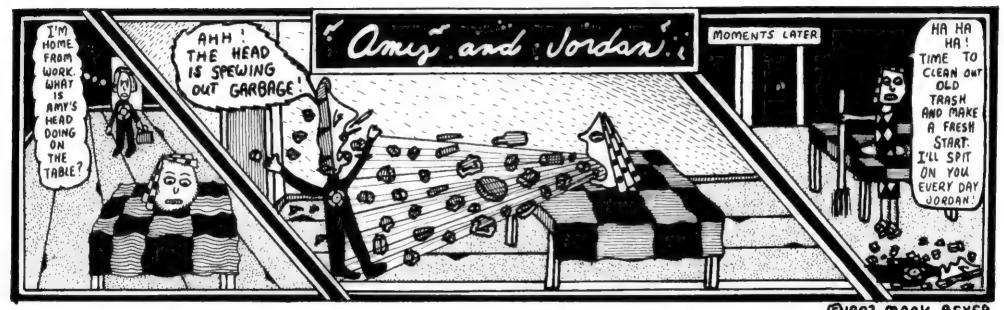




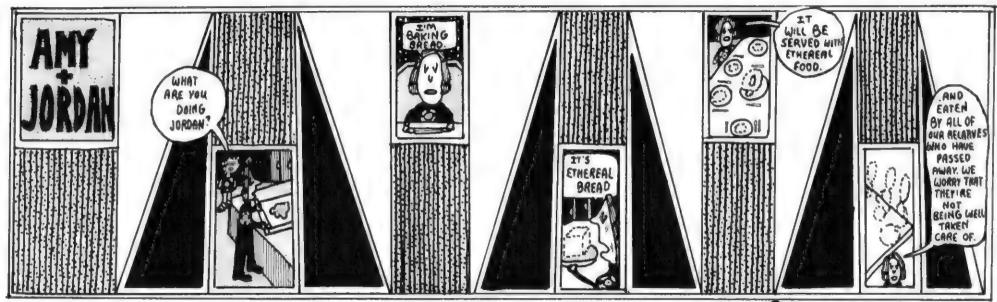
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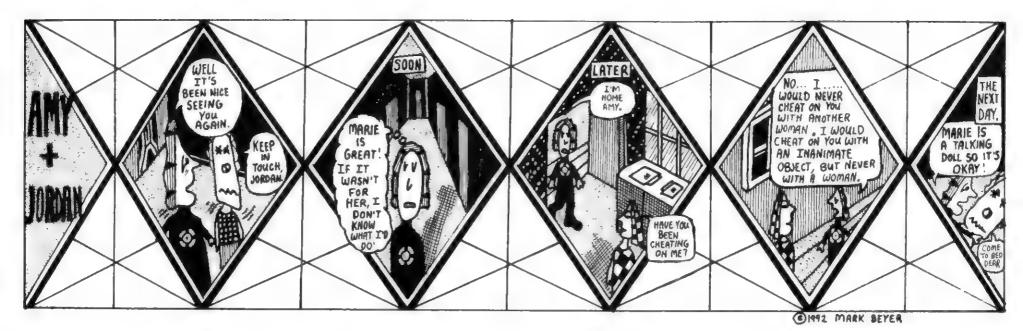
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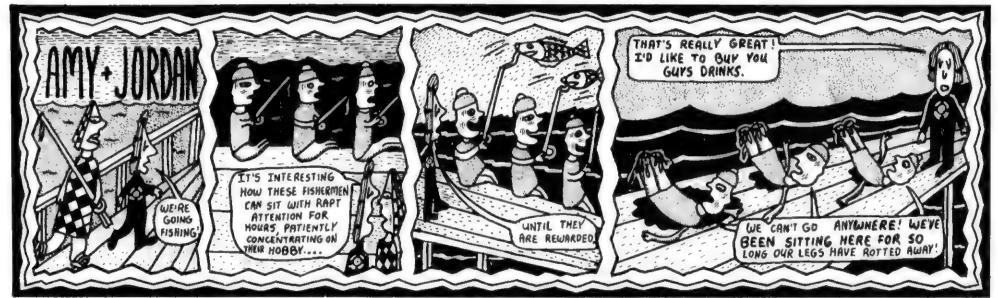


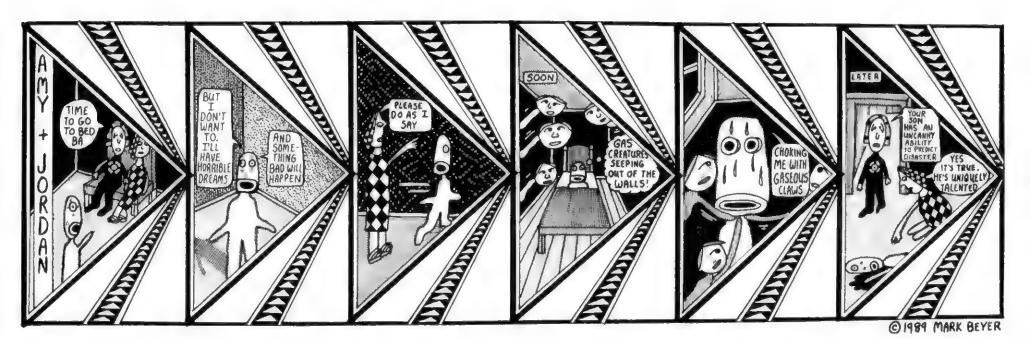
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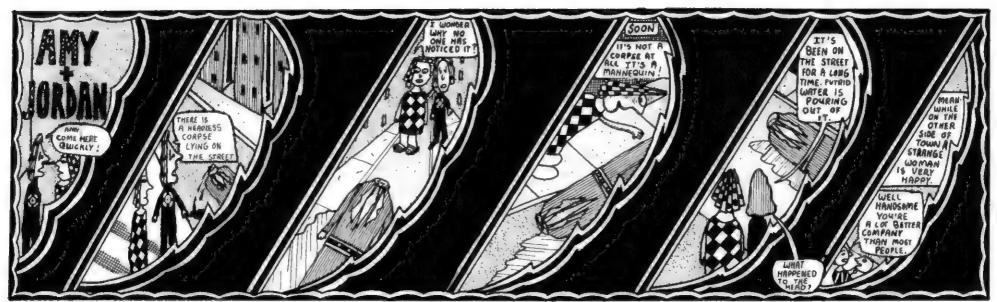


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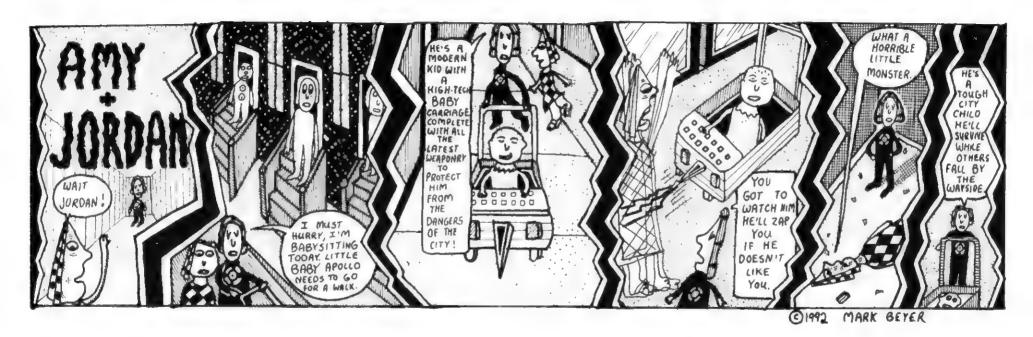


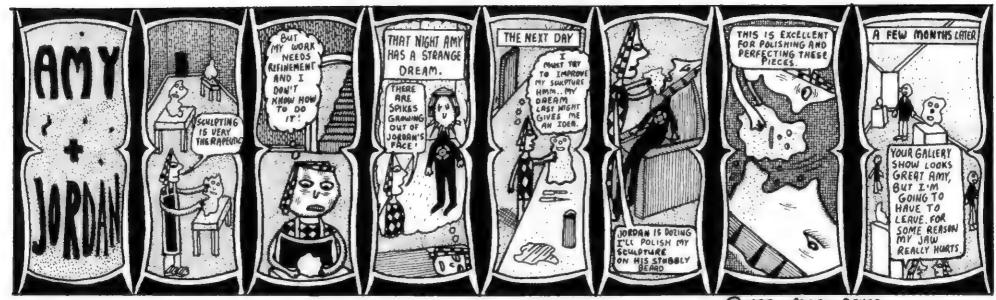






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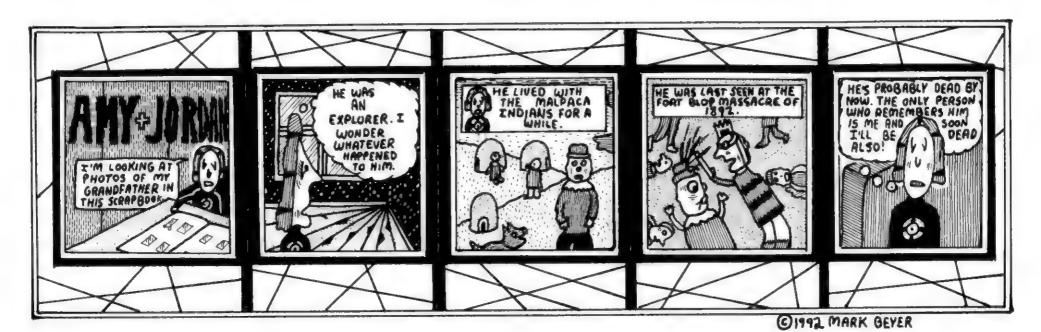


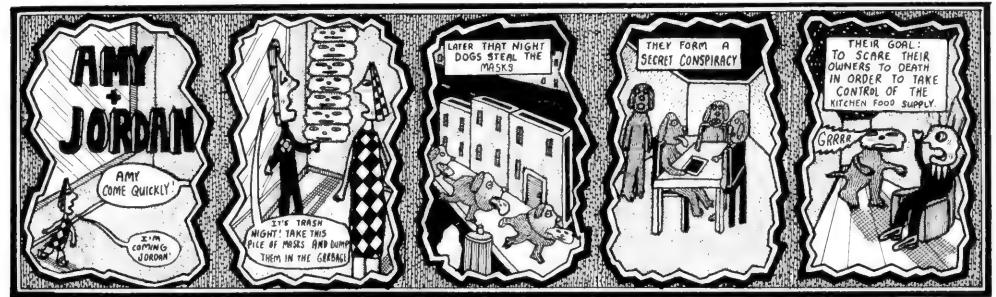


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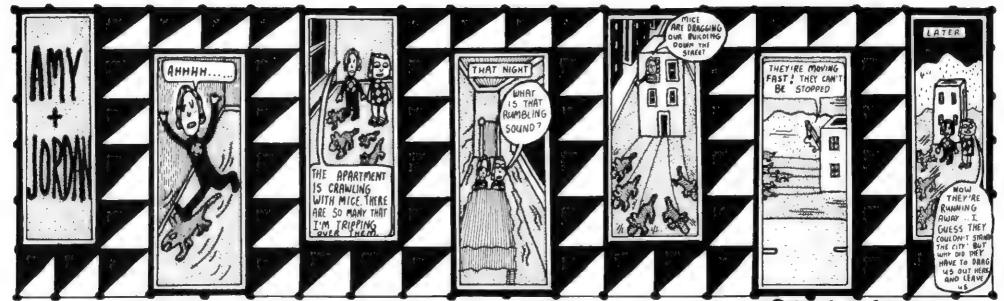




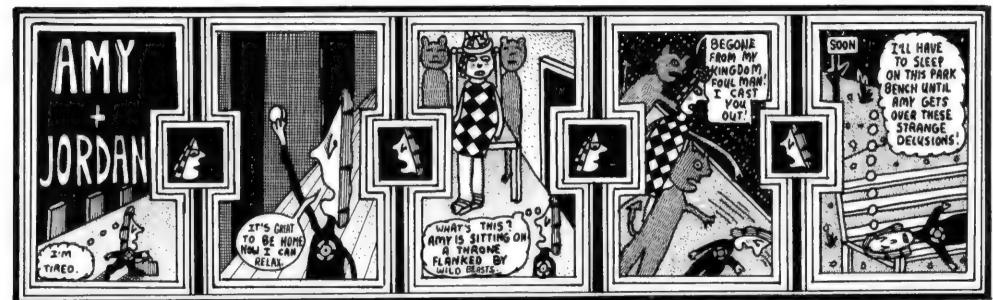
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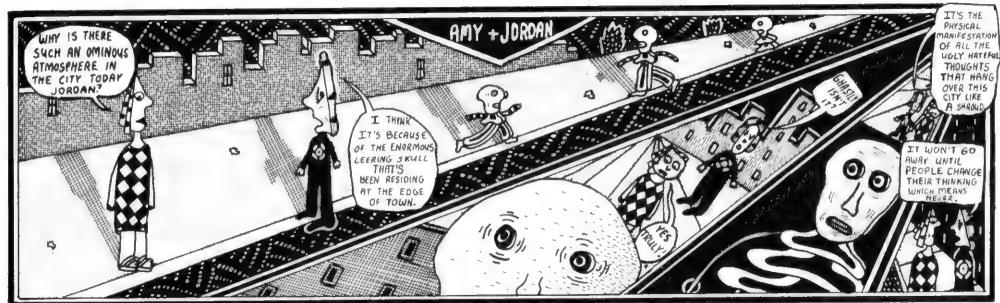
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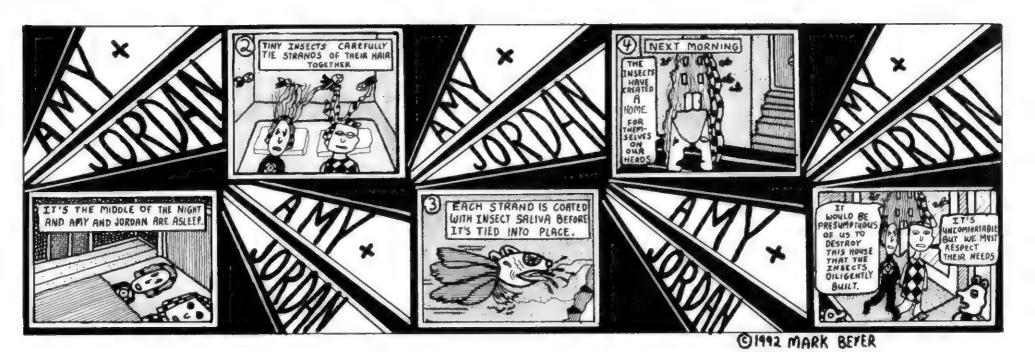
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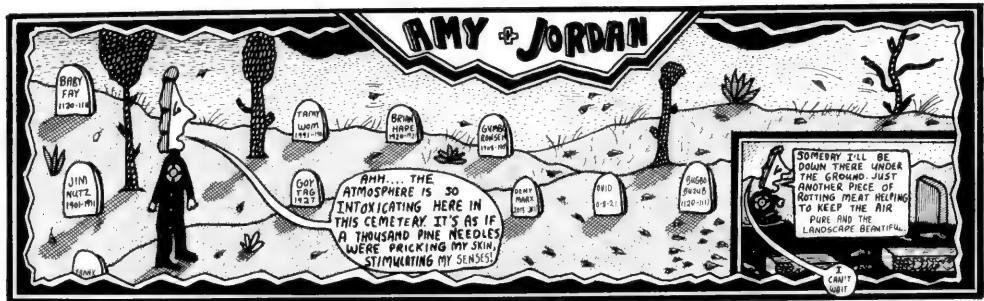


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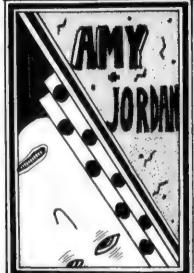


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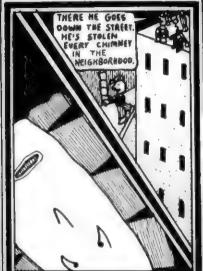


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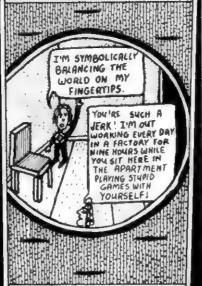




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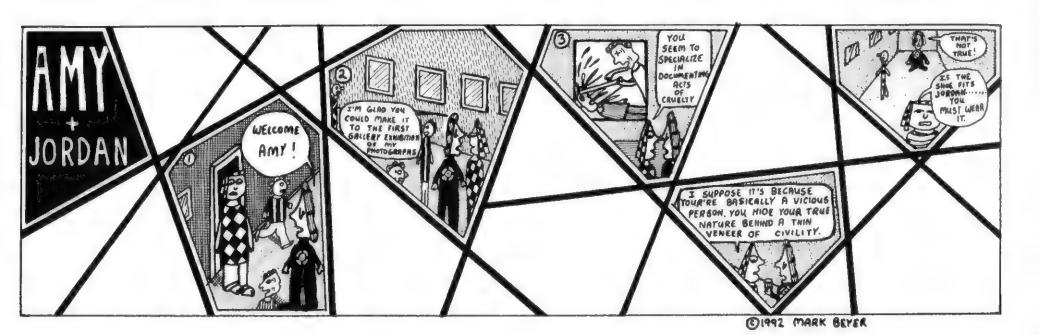


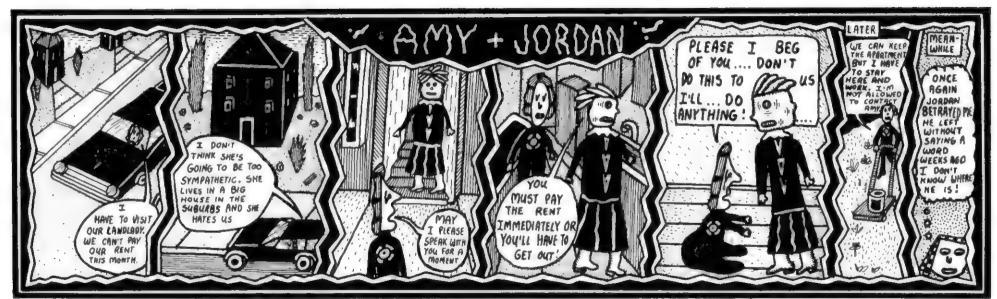




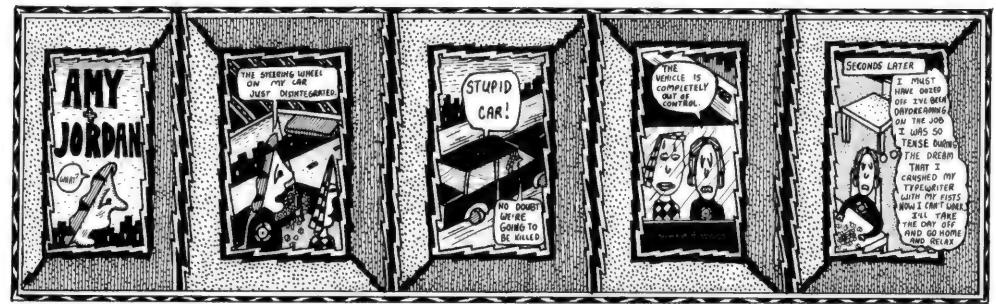


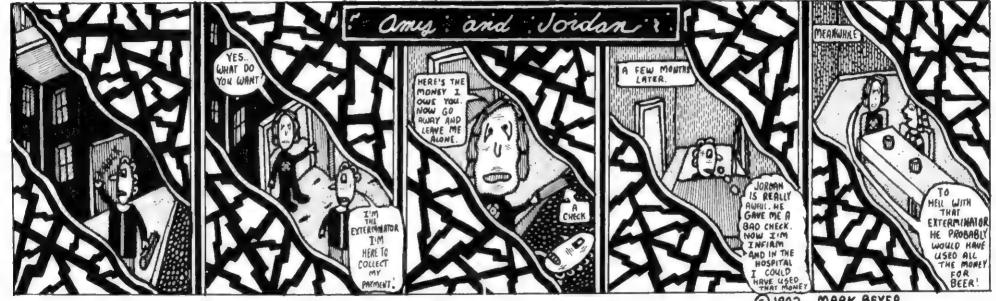






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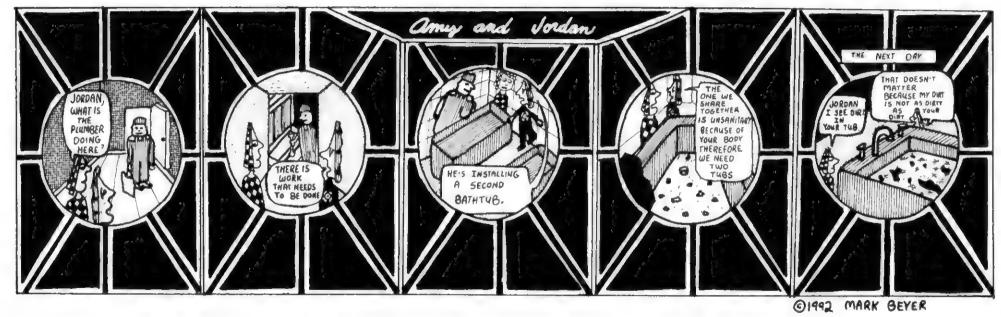


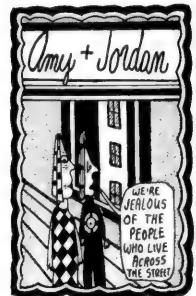


MARK BEYER



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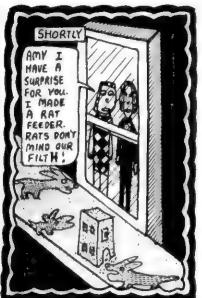












1911 MARK BEYER







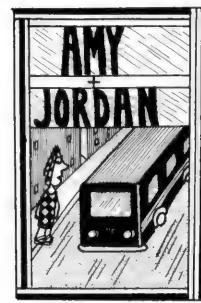


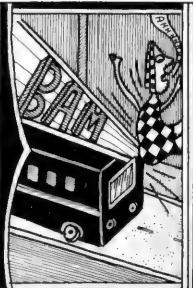


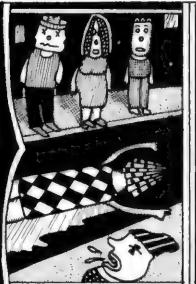




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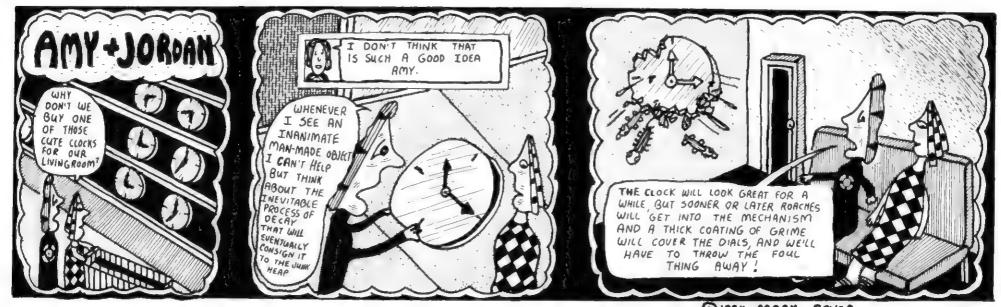








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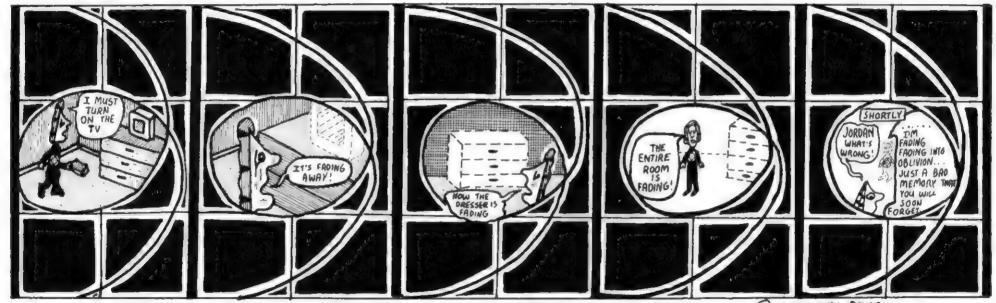


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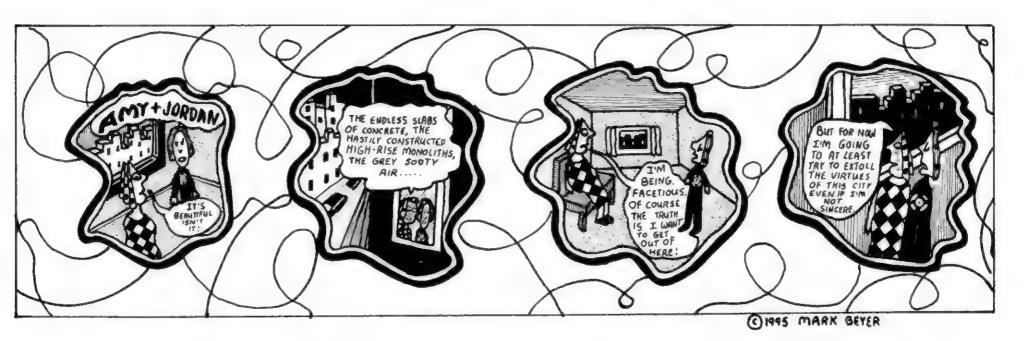


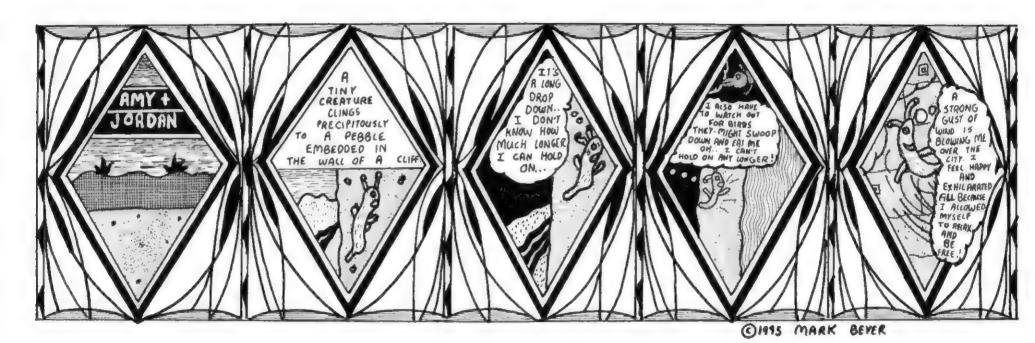


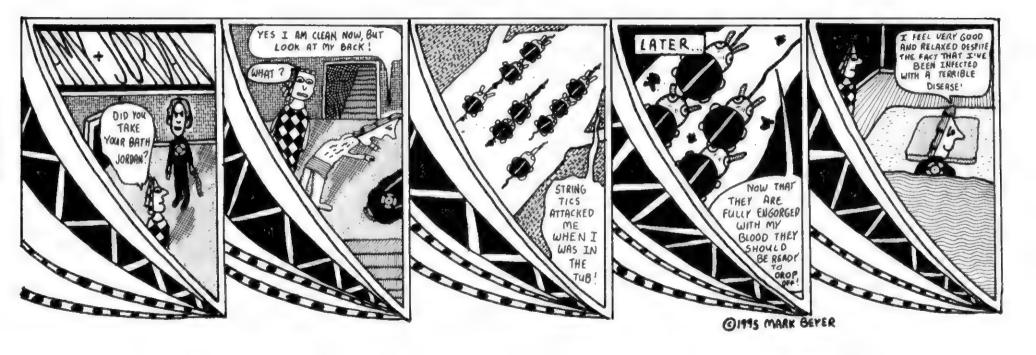
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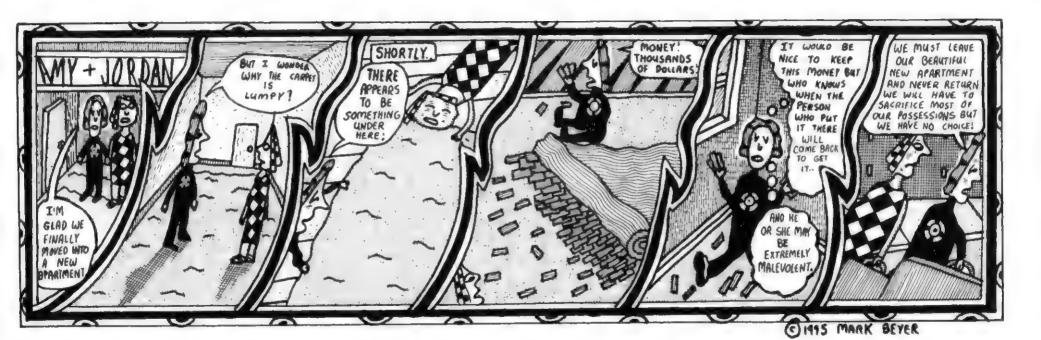


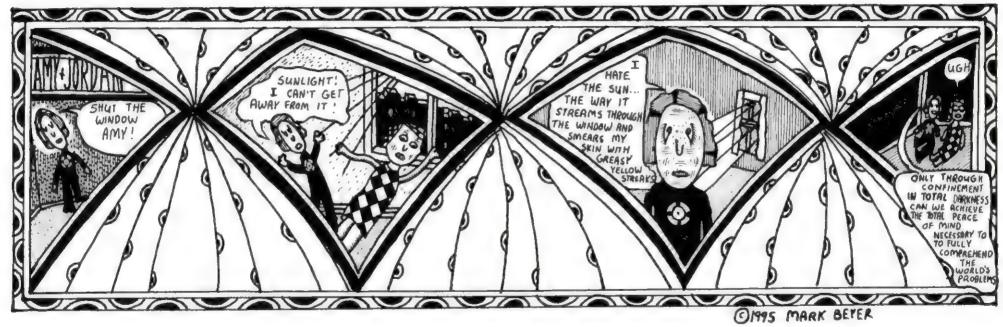




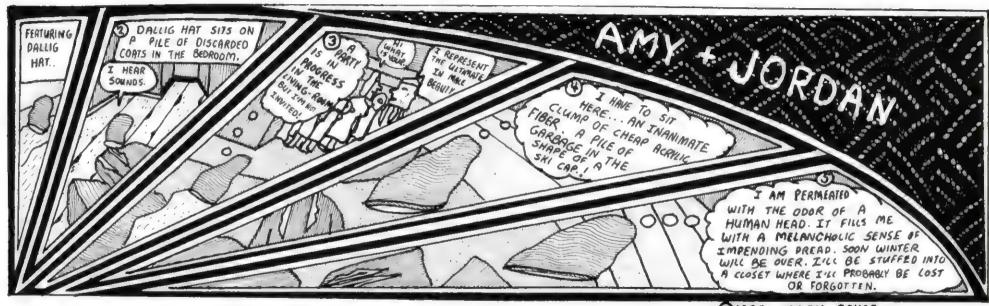


1915 MARK BEYER

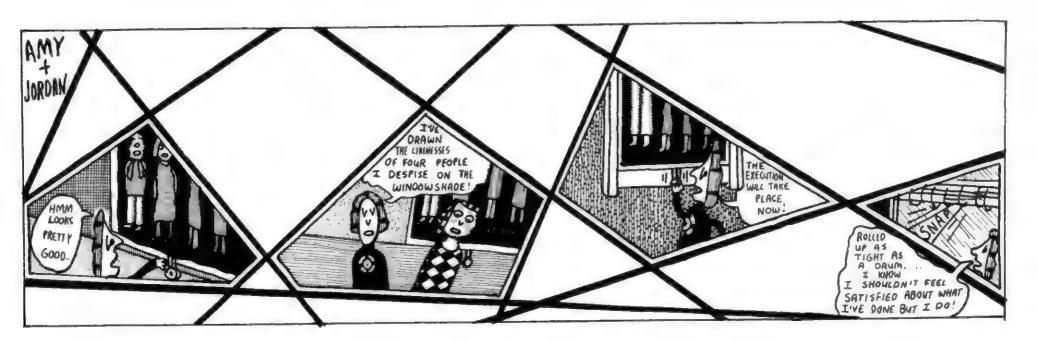


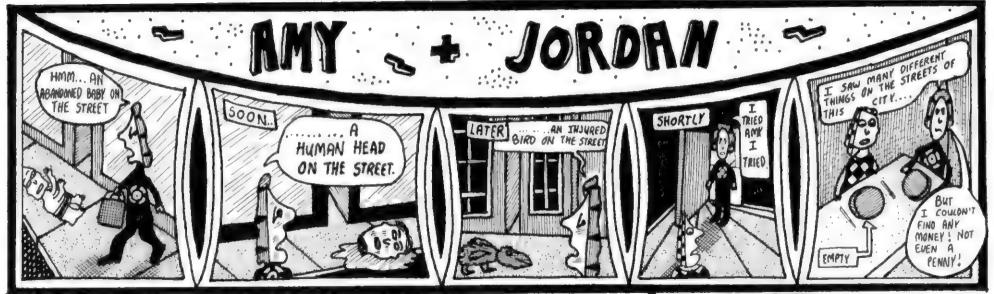




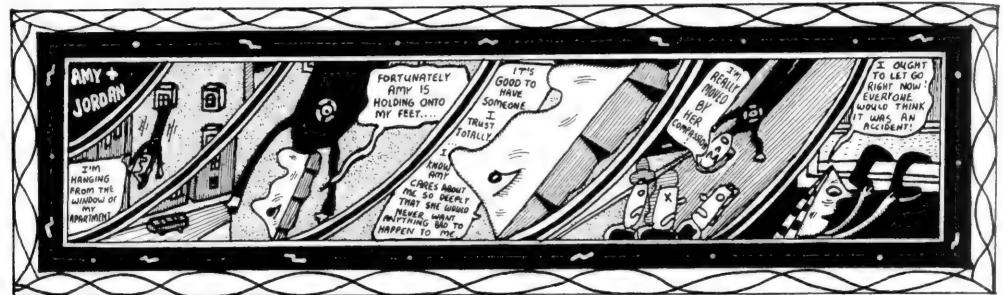


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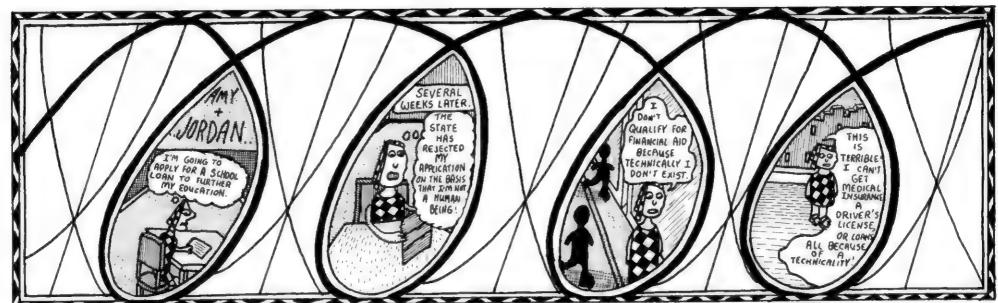




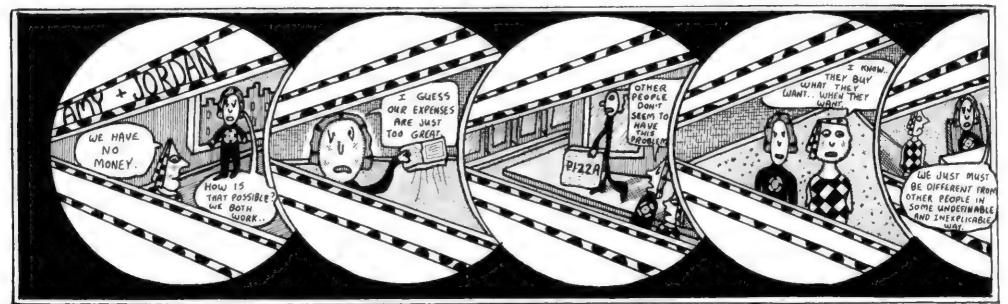
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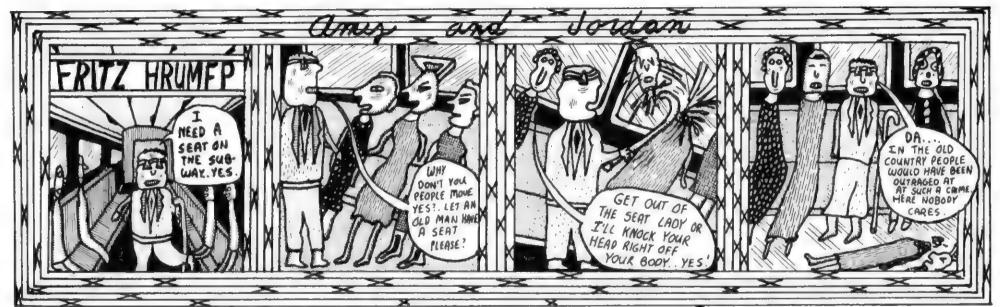
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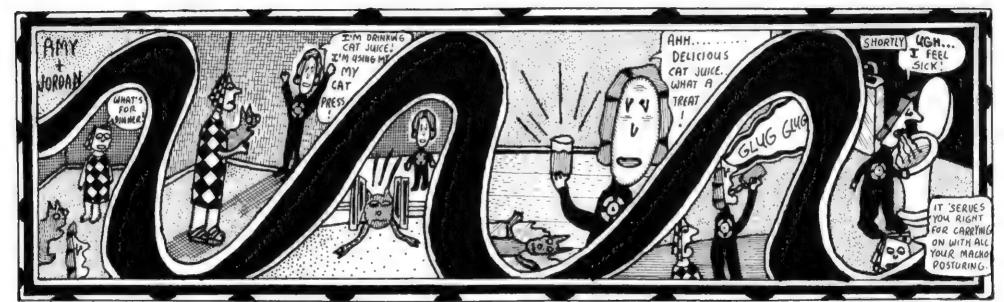


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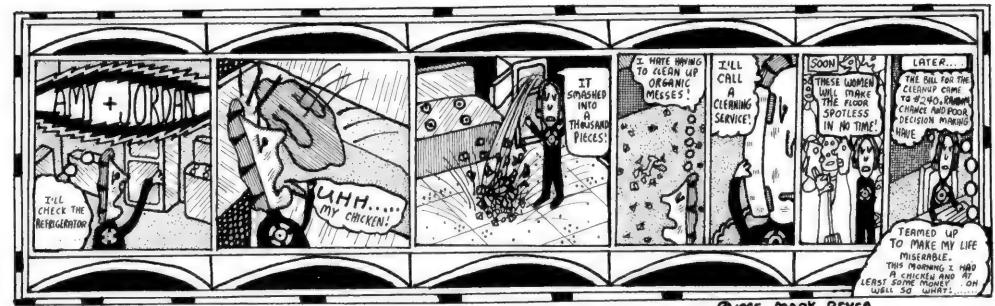


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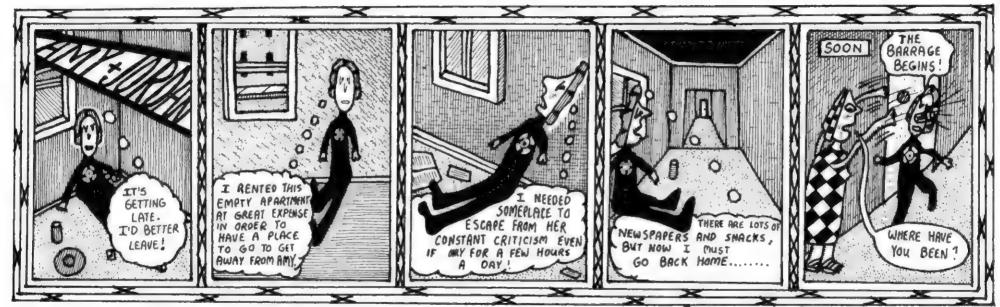




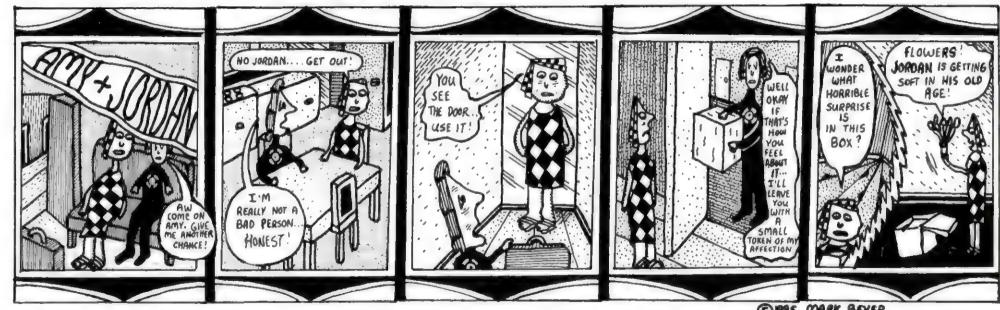
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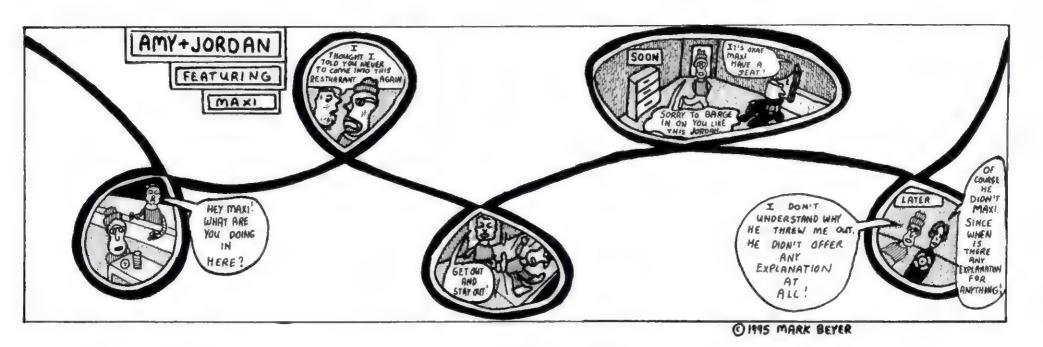
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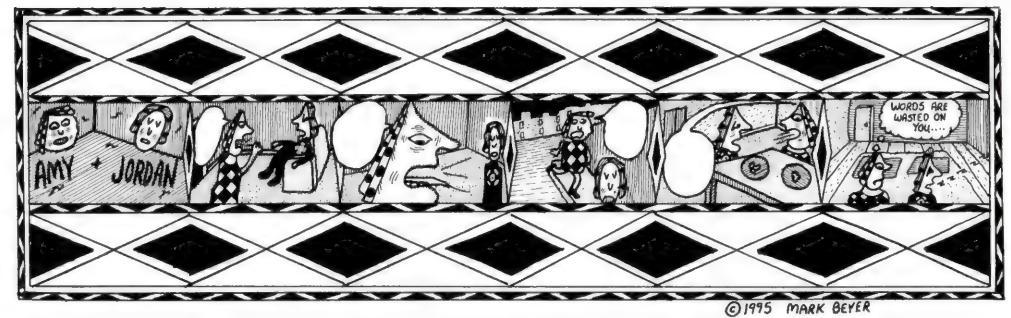


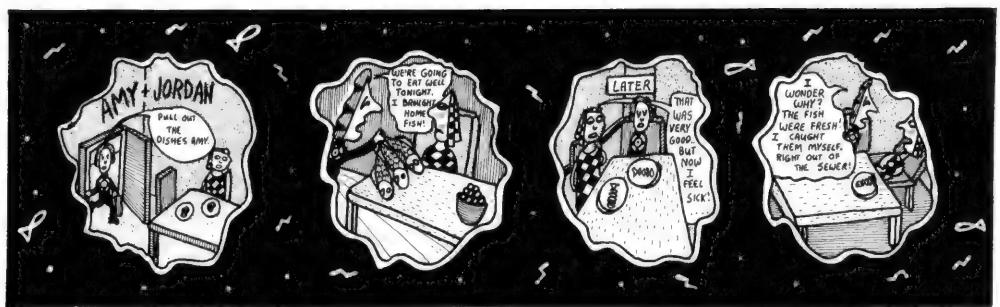
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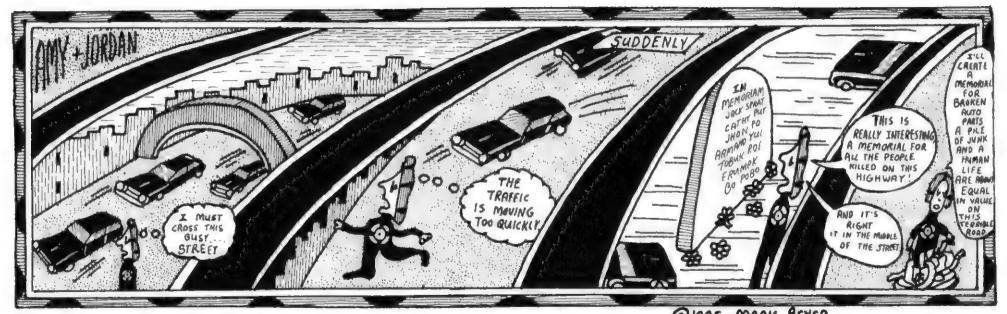




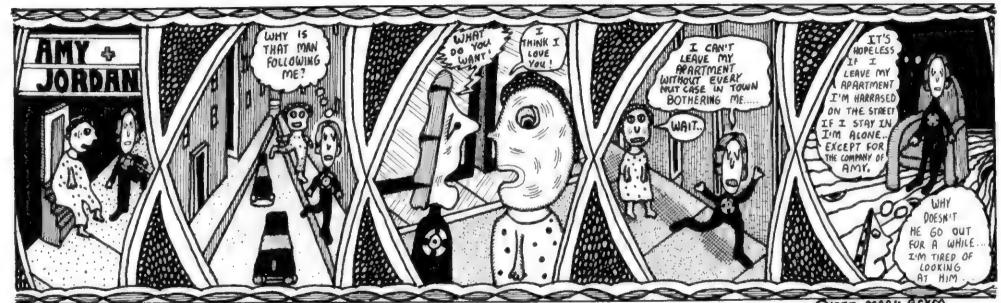
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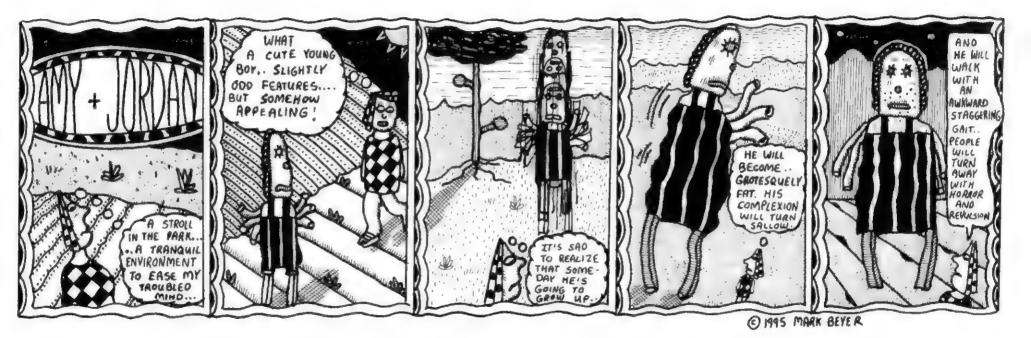
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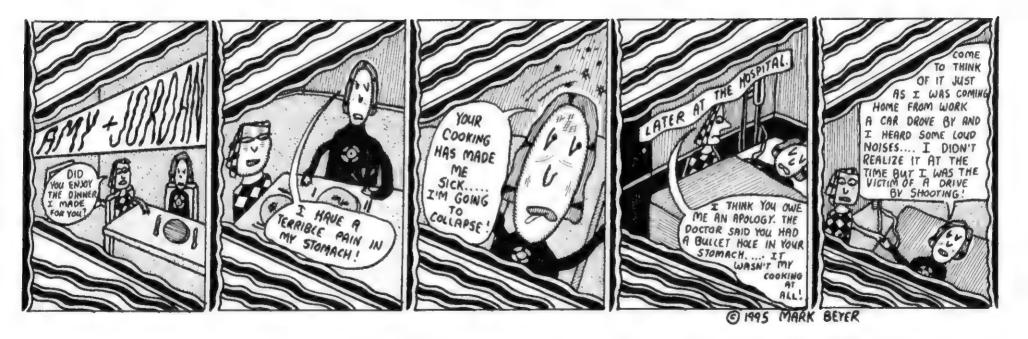
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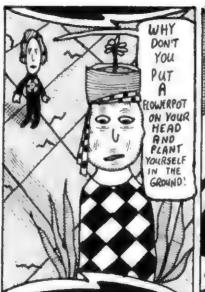
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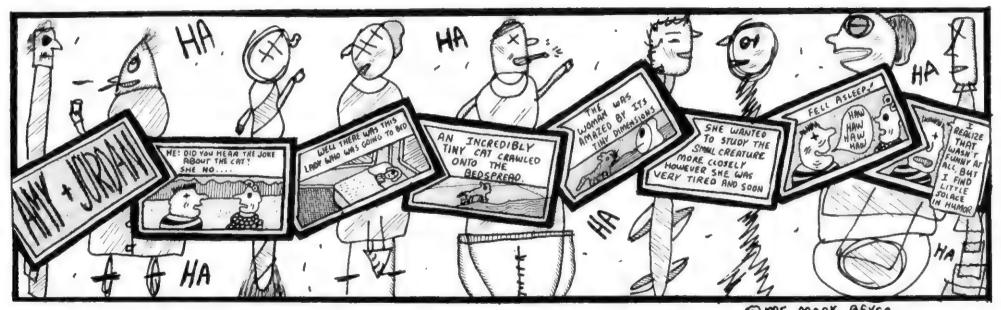






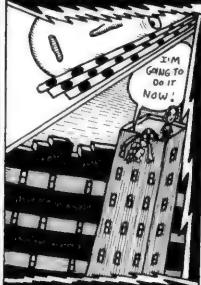


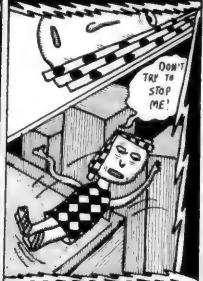
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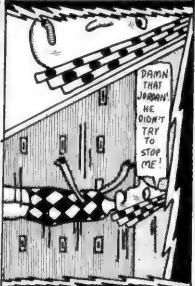


@MS MARK BEYER





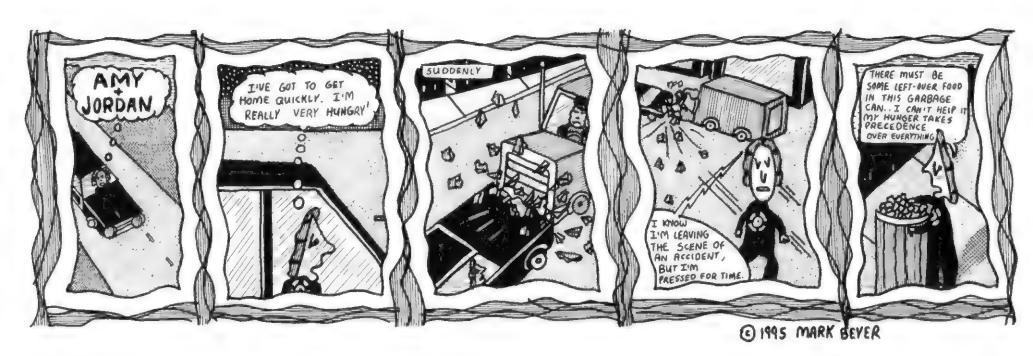






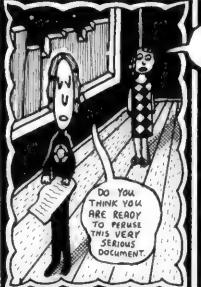
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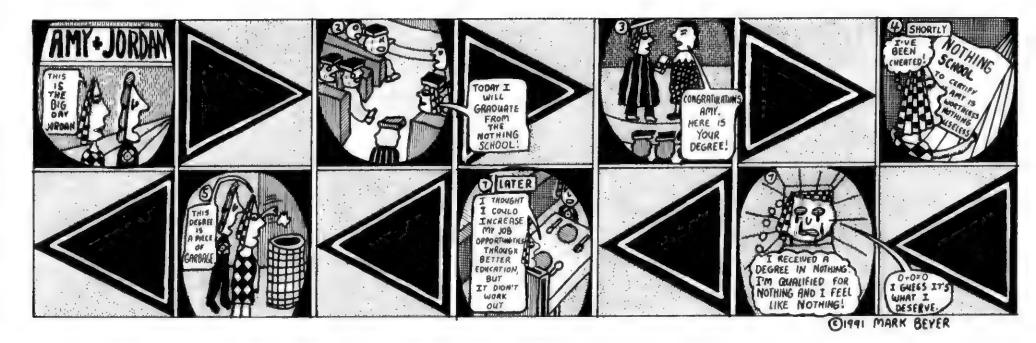








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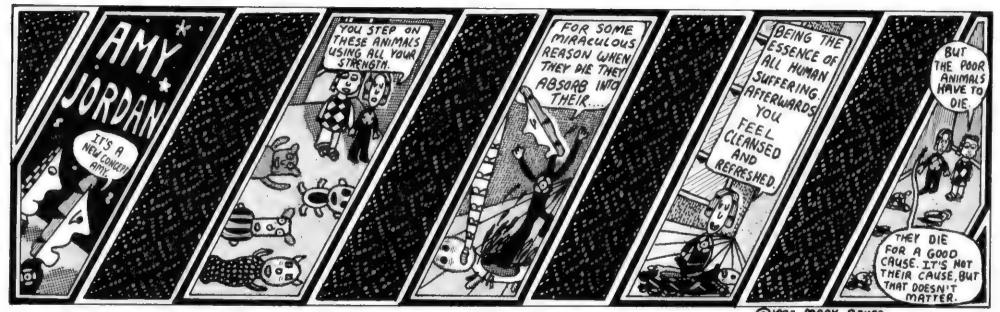


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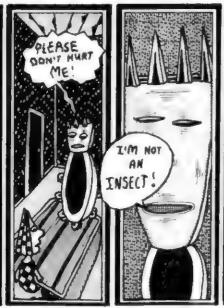
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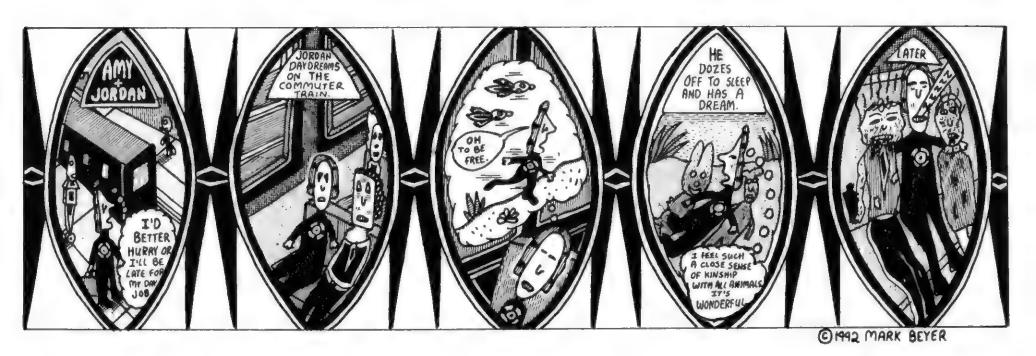


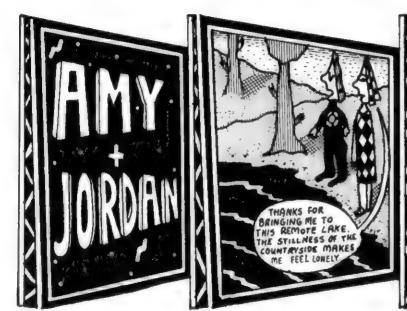


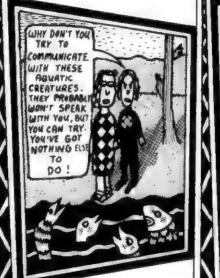




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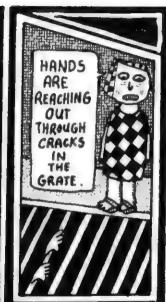


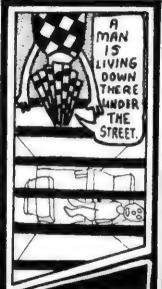
1112 MARK BEYER



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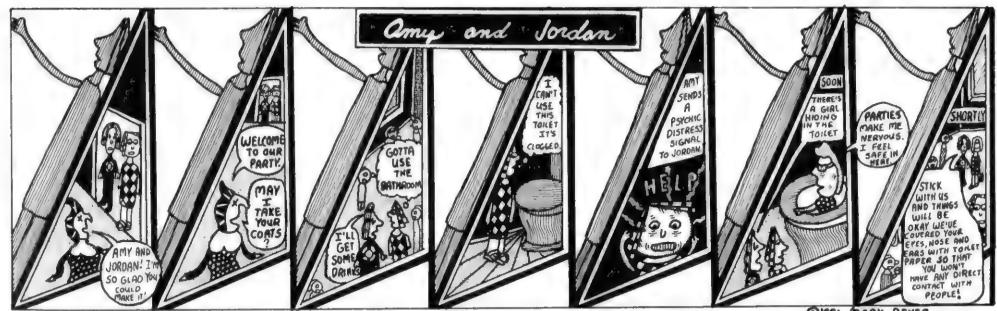












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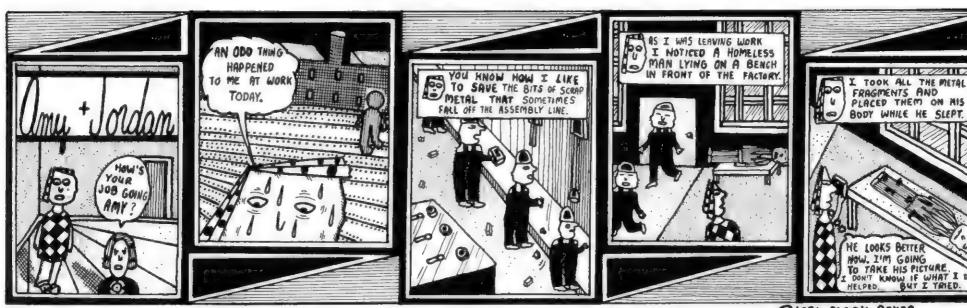








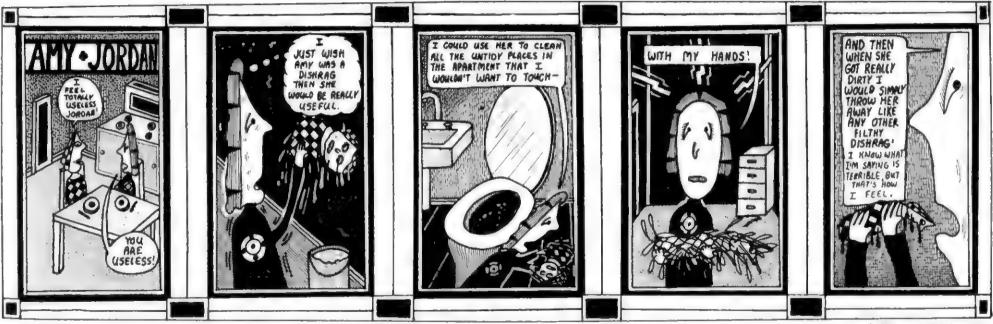
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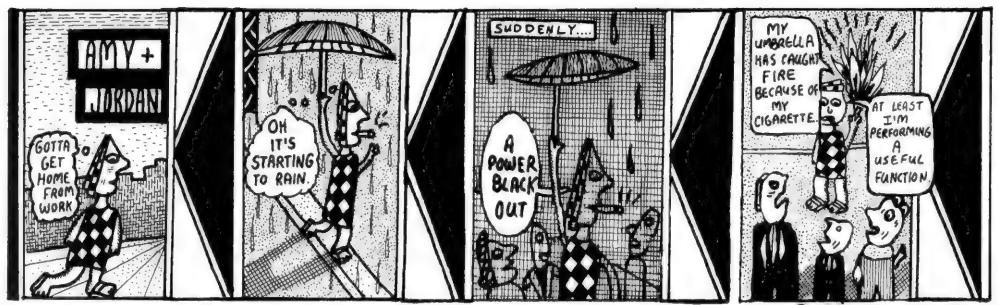


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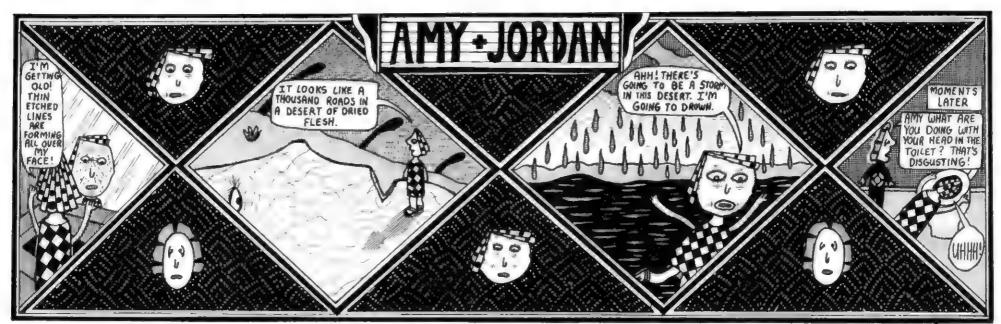




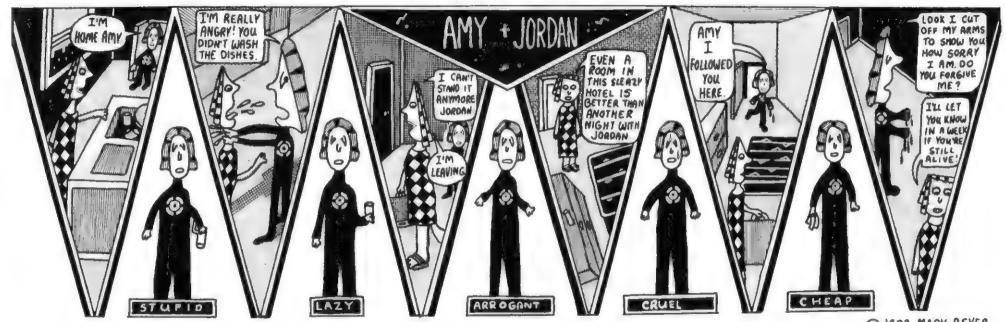
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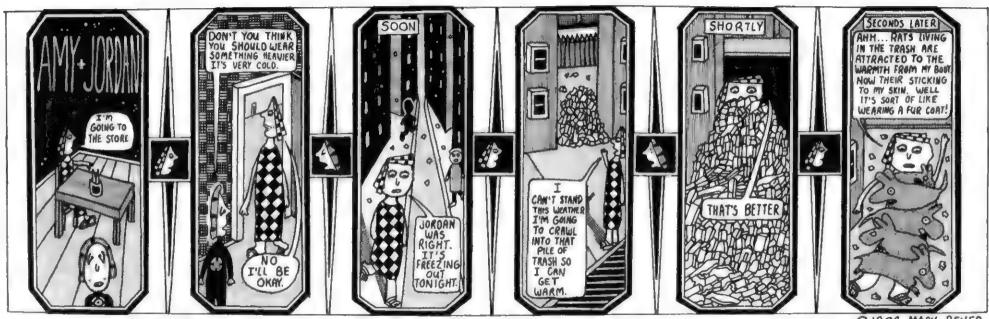




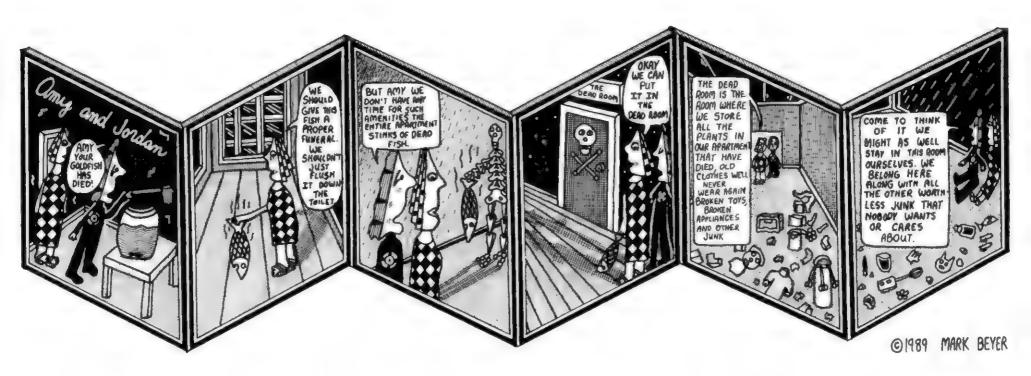


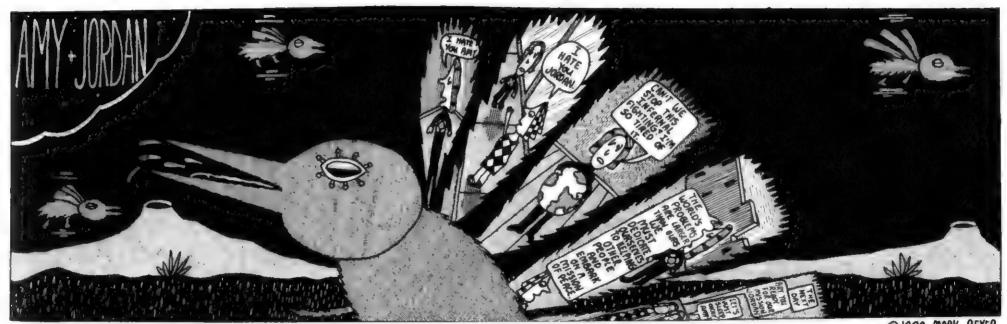


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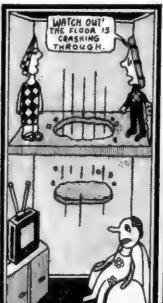


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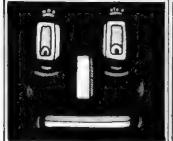








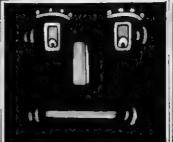


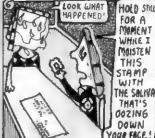












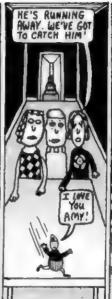












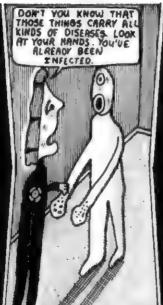


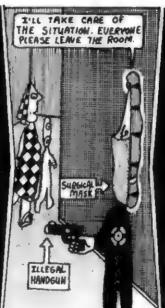








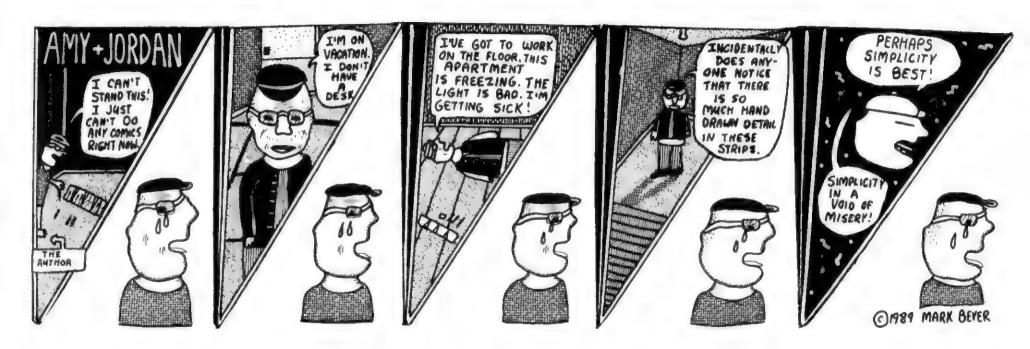




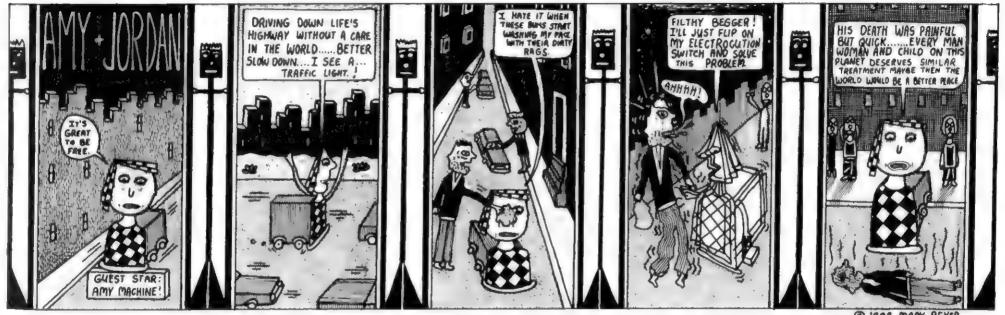




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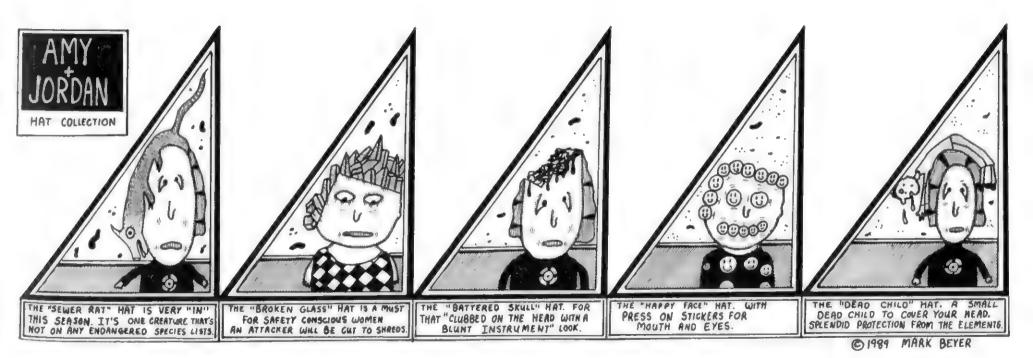


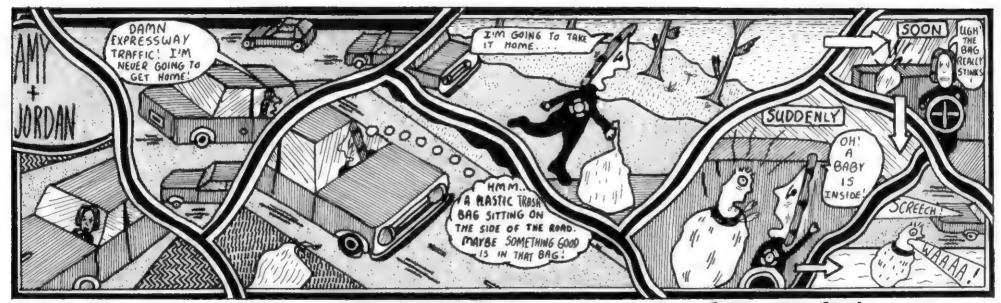


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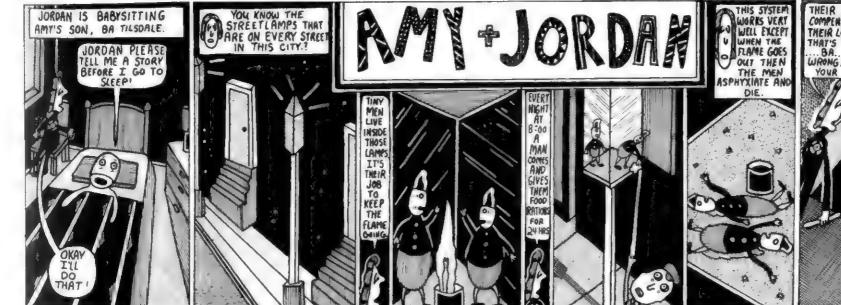


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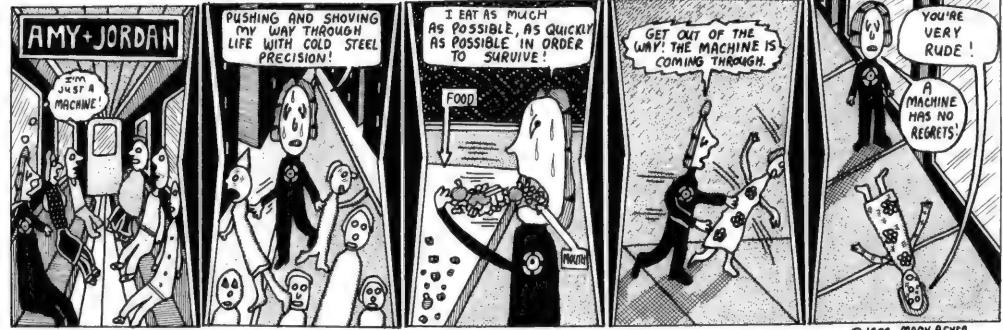






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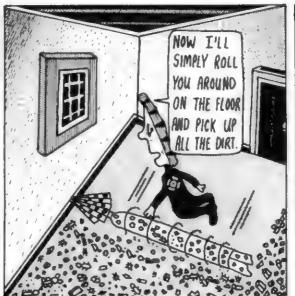
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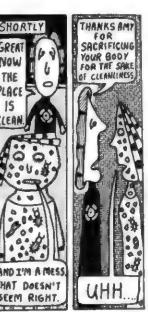




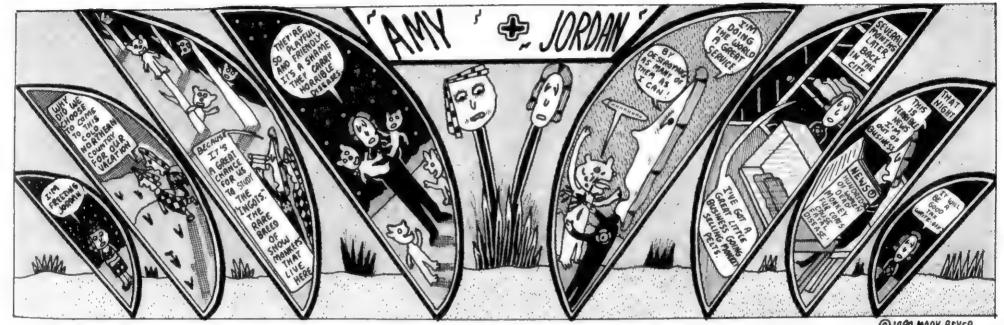








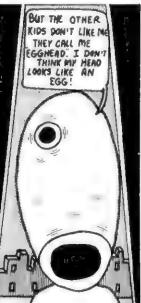
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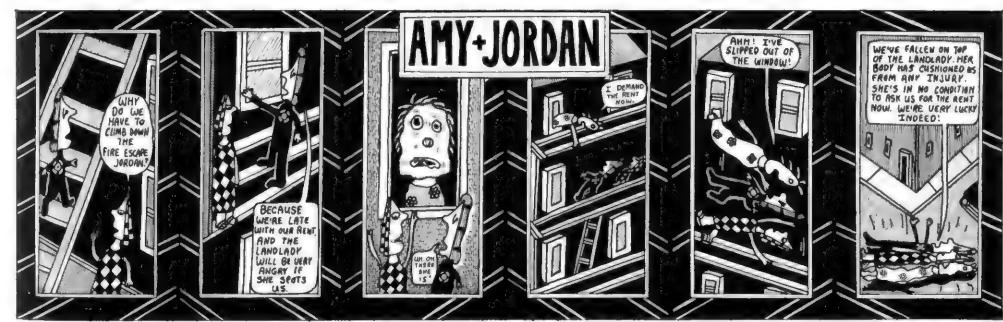


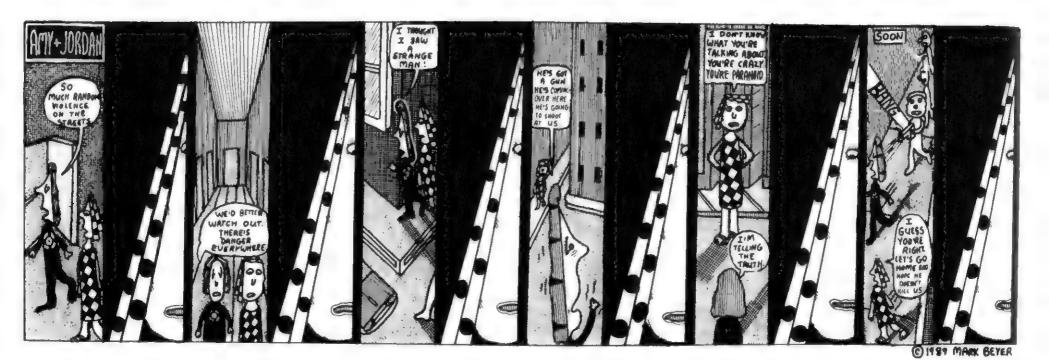


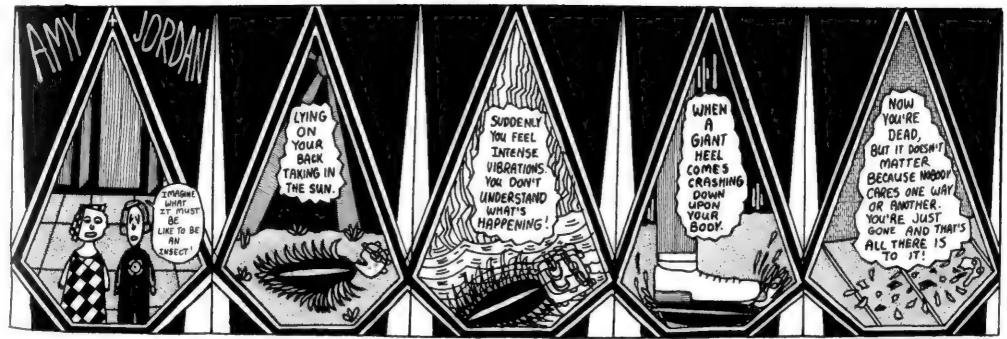




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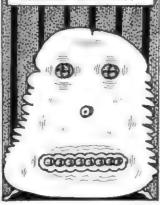


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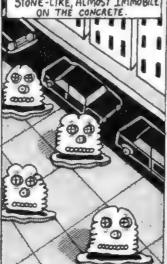
AMY-JORDAN



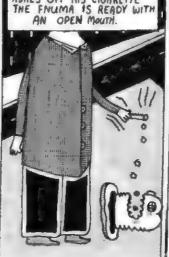
FNUMAS
ARE BALL SHAPED CREMURES
WITH POROUS SKIN,
DARK BEADY EYES,
AND MINUSCULE BRAINS THEY
ARE NOTED FOR THEIR LAZY
SHIFTLESS HABITS, AND
RAVENOUS APPETITES.



THEIR FAVORITE HABITATS
ARE SIDEWALKS IN LARGE
CITIES, WHERE THEY CROUCH
STONE-LIKE, ALMOST IMMOBILE
ON THE CONCRETE.



IF AN OCCASIONAL
PASSERBY HAPPENS TO
THOUGHTJESSLY FLICK THE
ASHES OFF HIS CIGARETTE
THE FNUMA IS READY WITH
AN OPEN MOUTH.



UNFORTUNATELY BECAUSE
OF THE EXTREMELY THIN
LAYER OF SKIN THAT COVERS
THEIR GELATINOUS BODIES,
THEY ARE EASILY
CRUSHED.

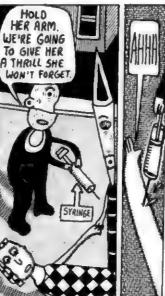






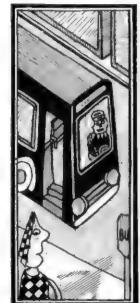








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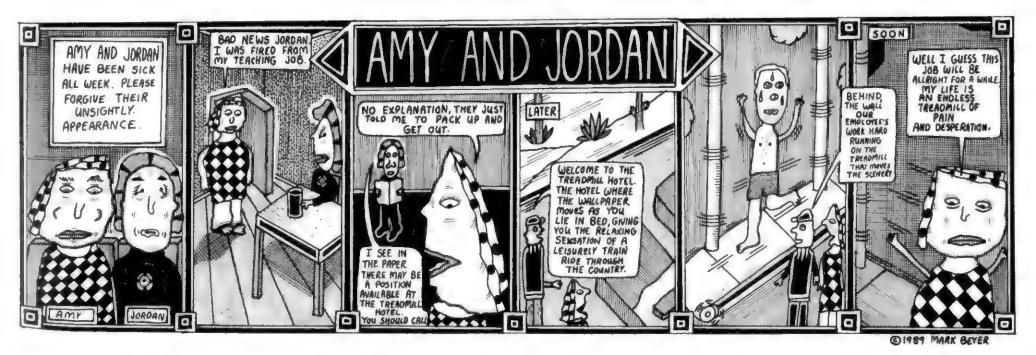


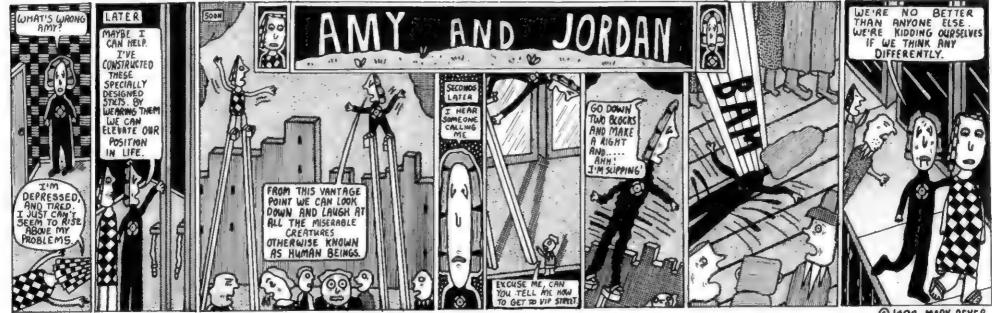






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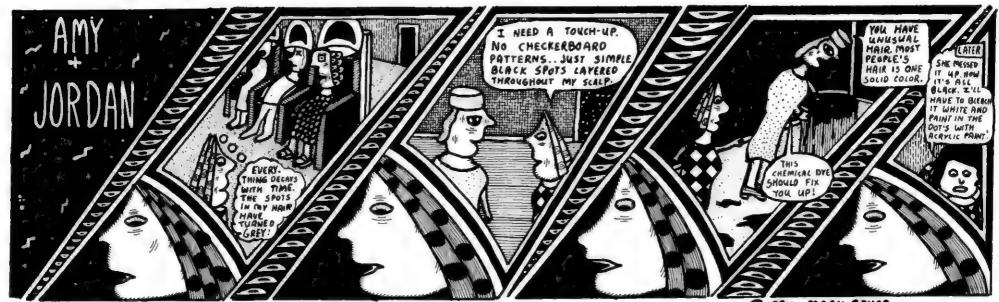
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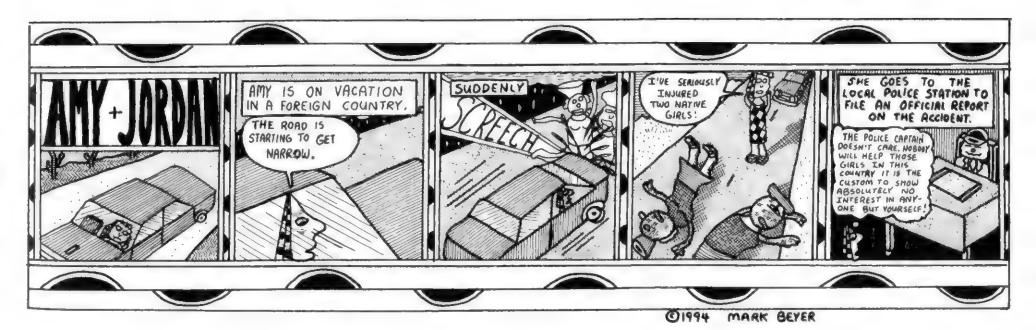
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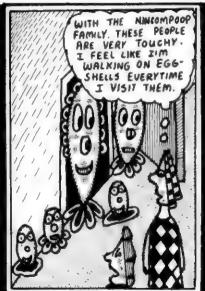
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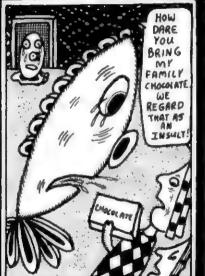


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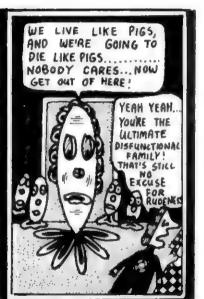






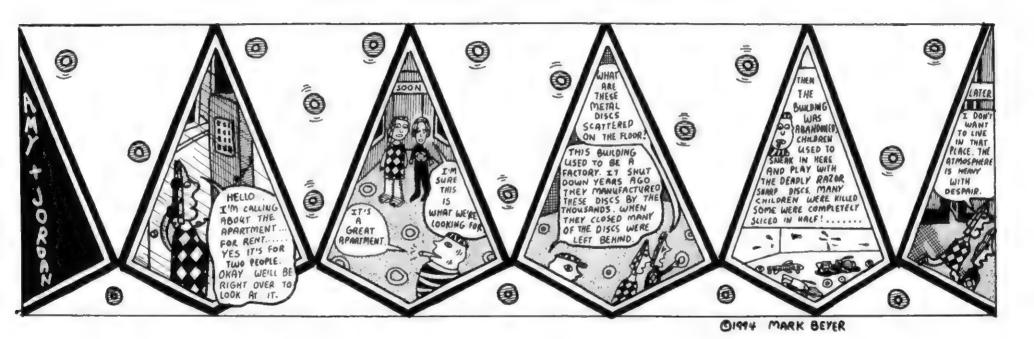


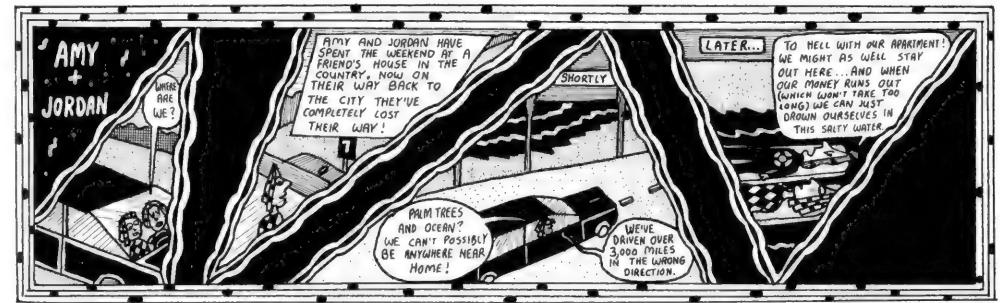






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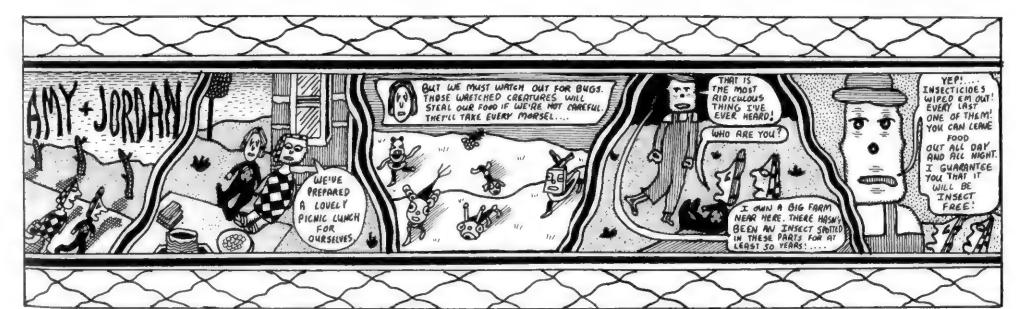




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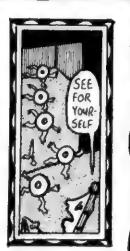


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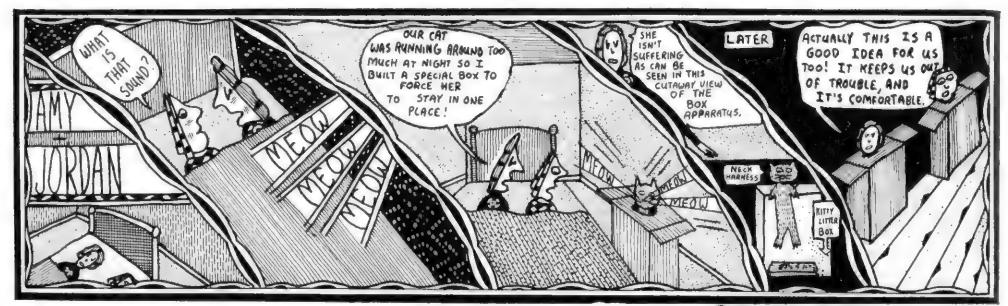




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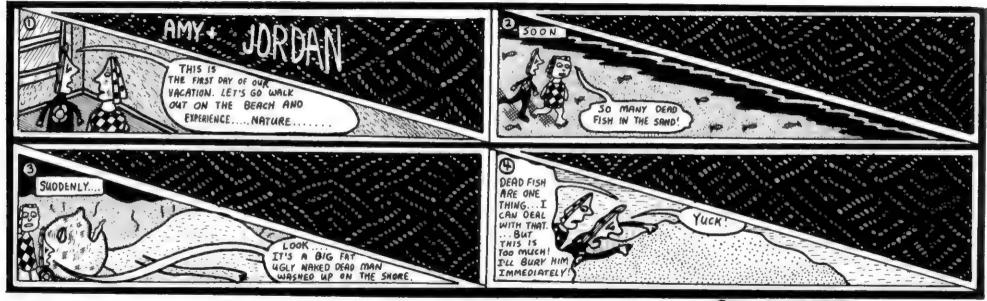




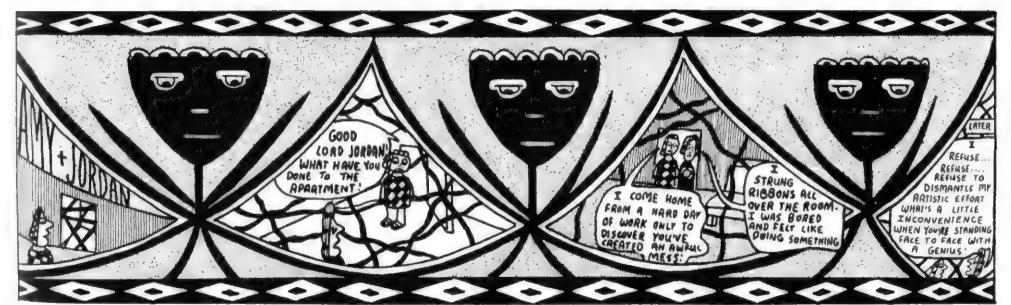




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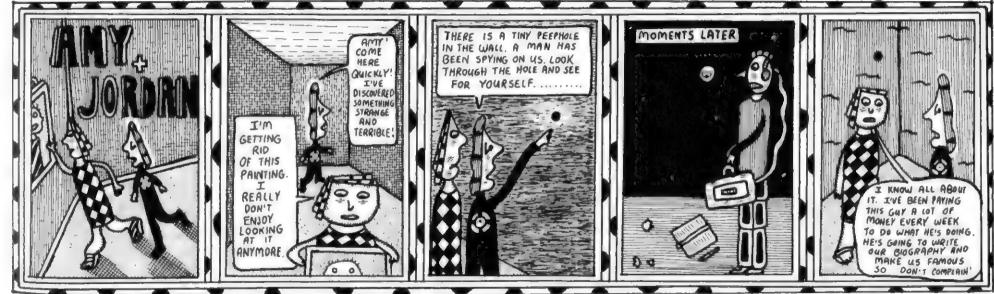


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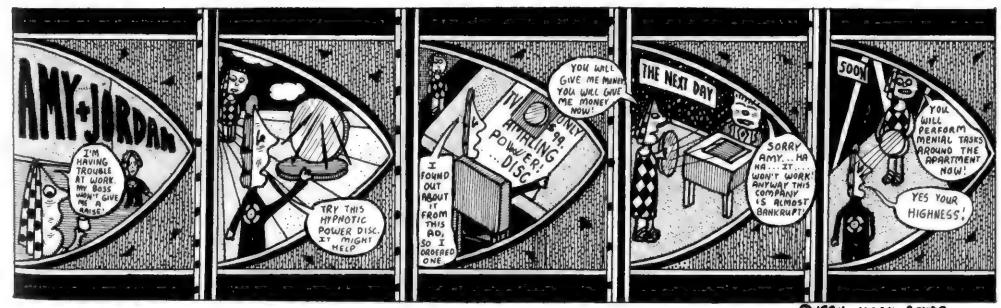
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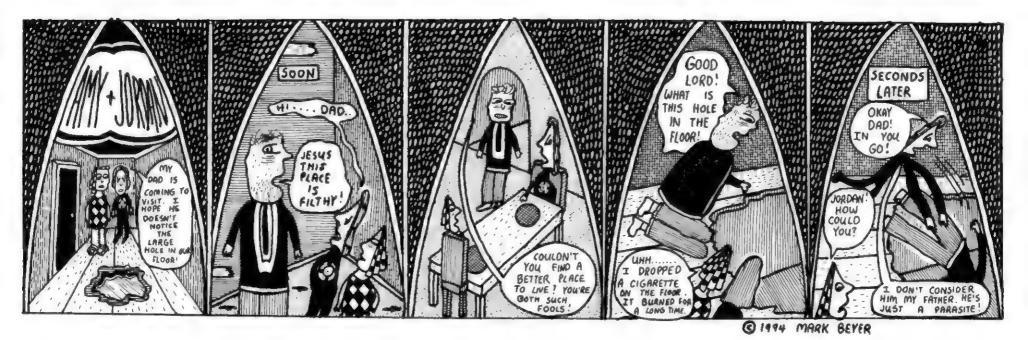


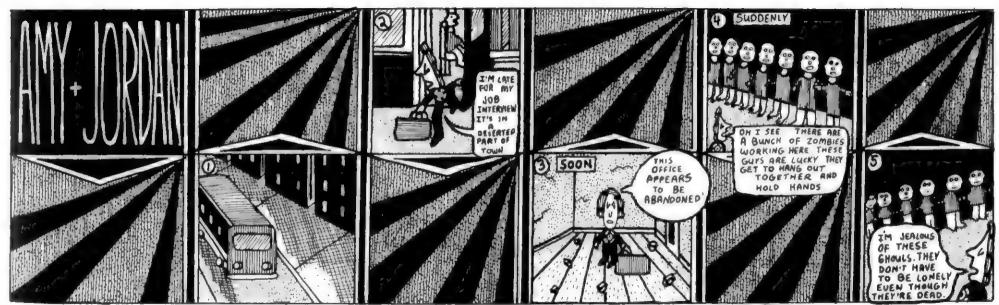
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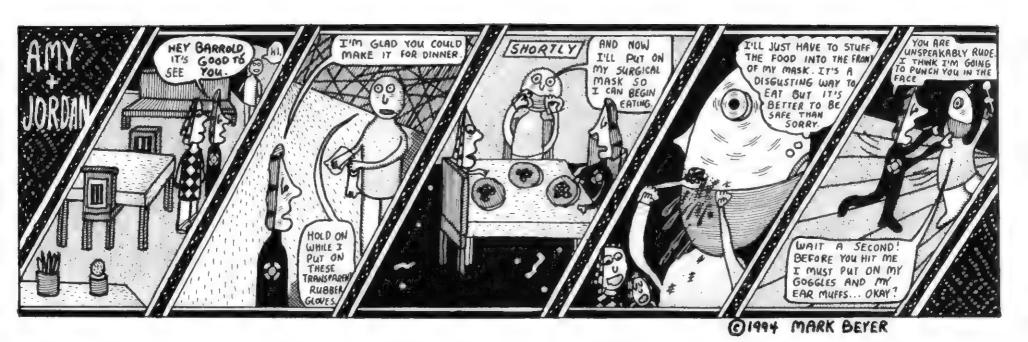


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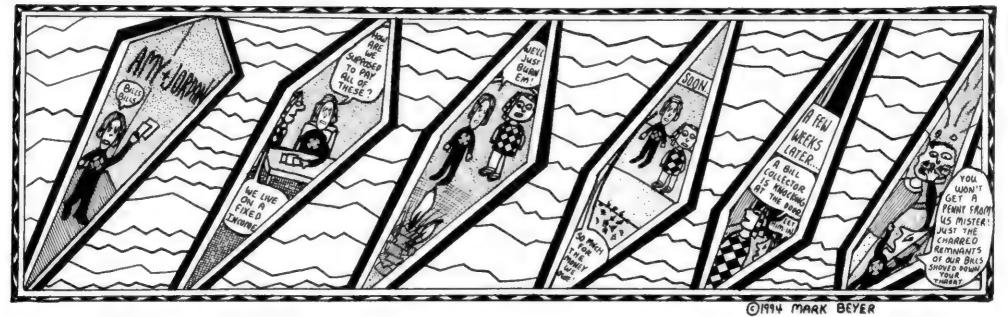




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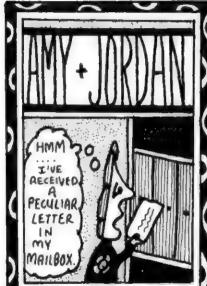




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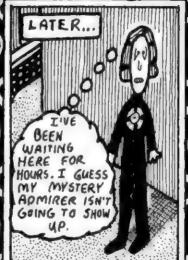


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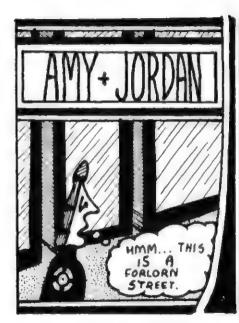




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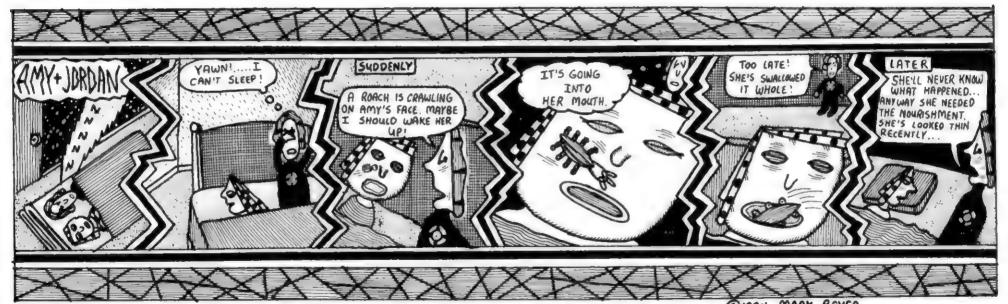




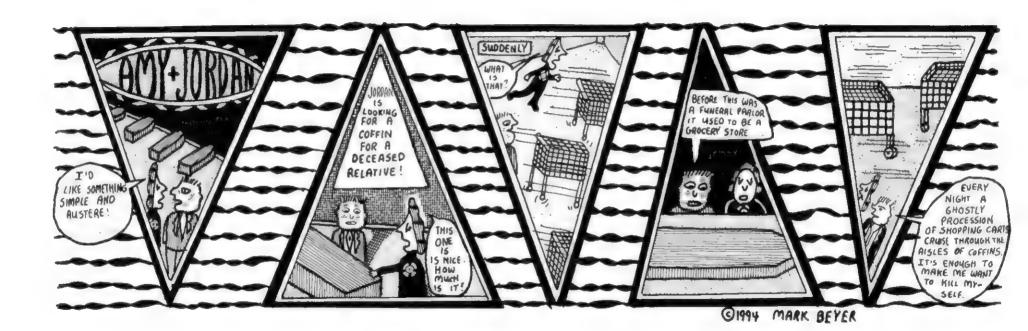
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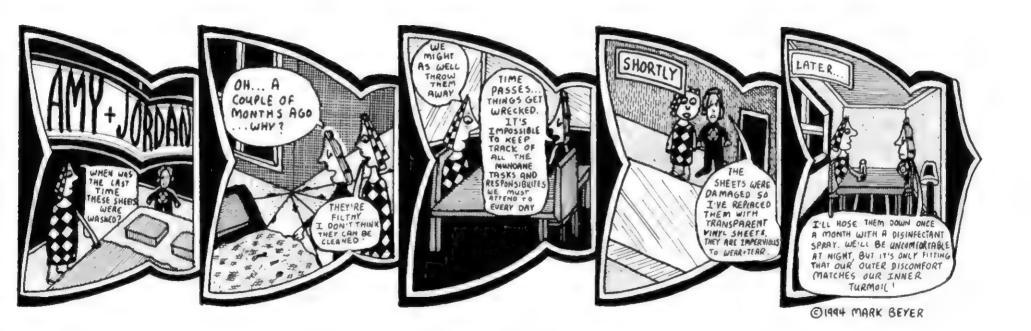


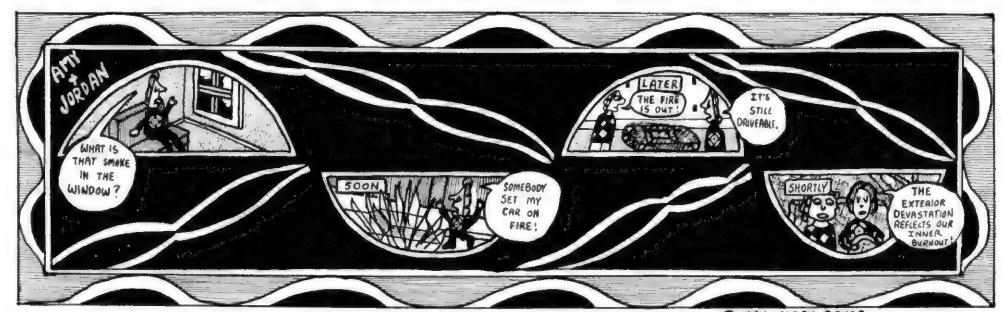
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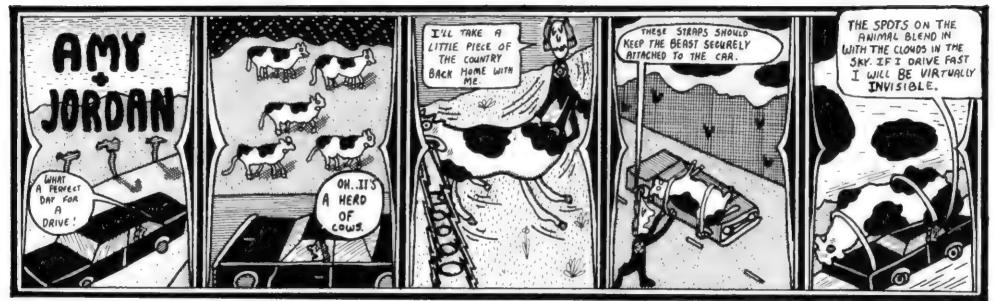
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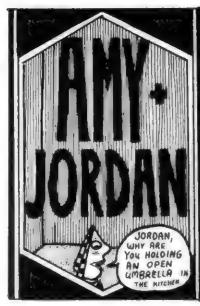




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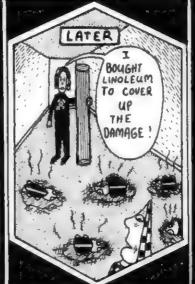


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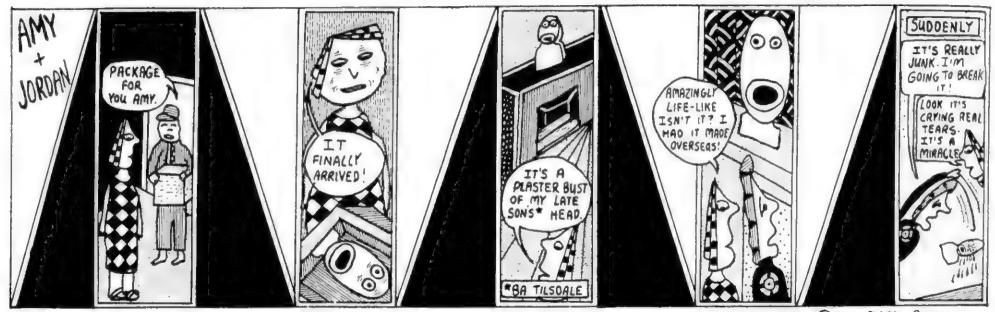




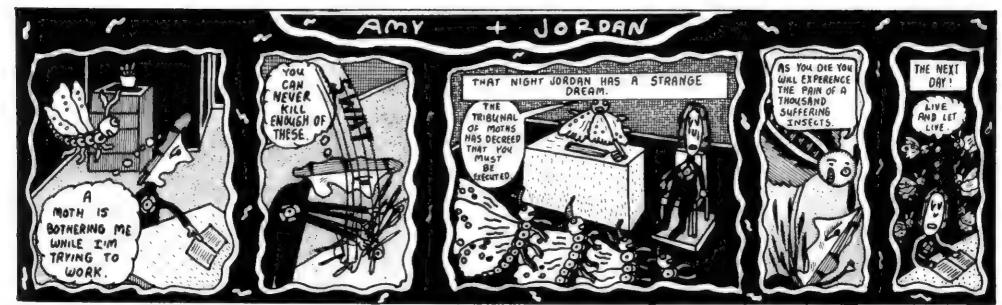


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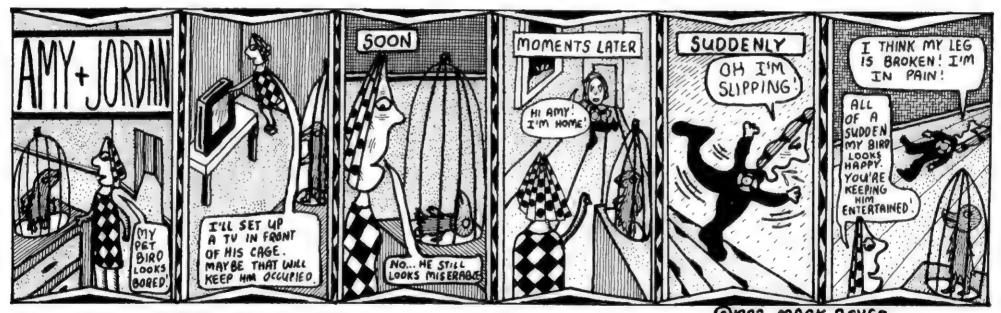
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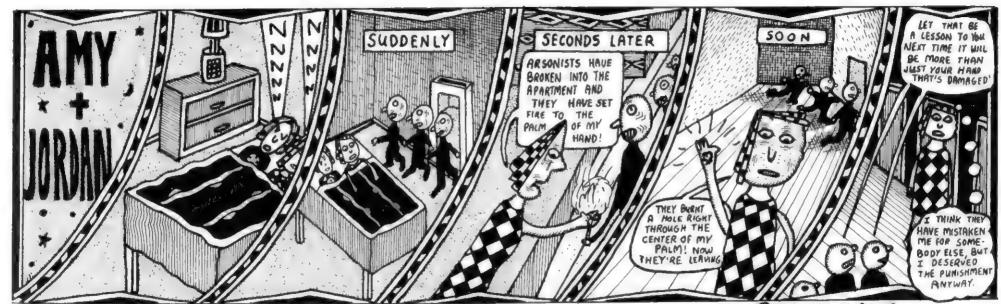
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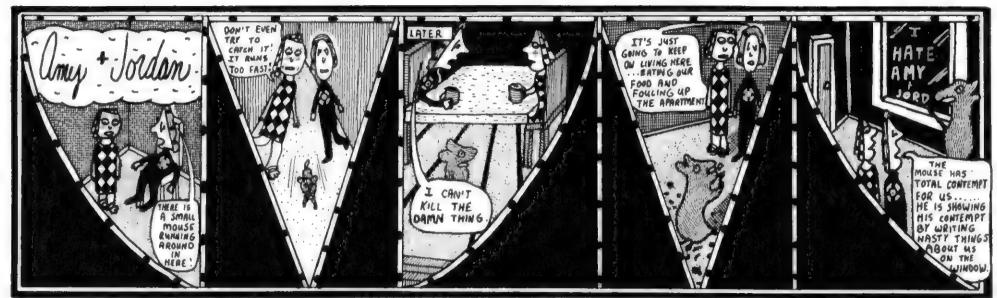
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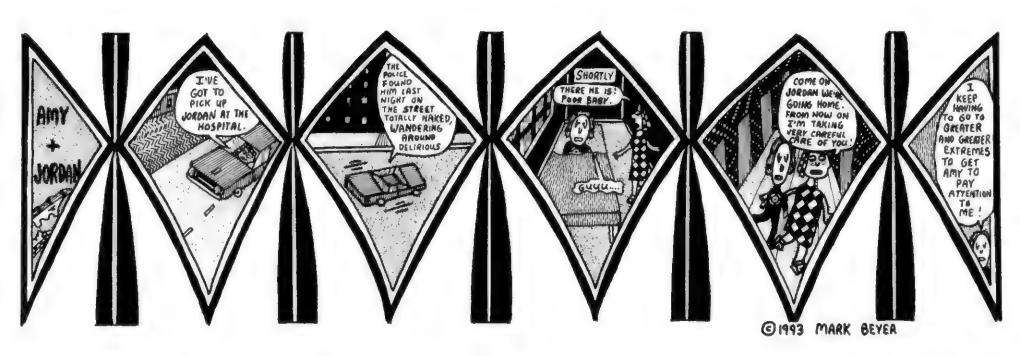
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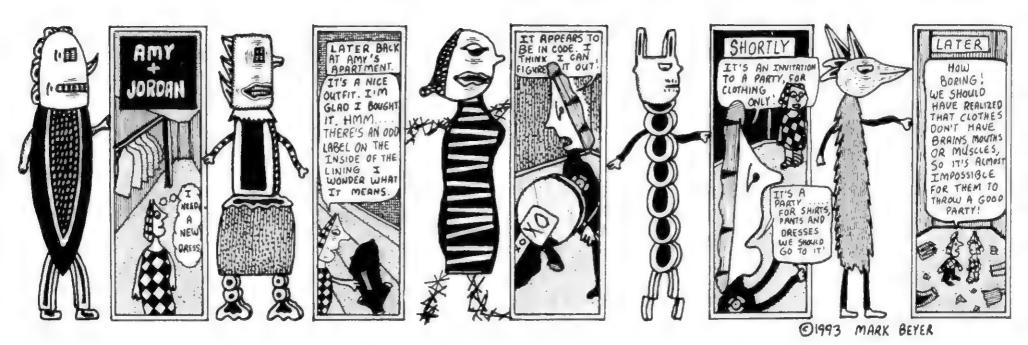


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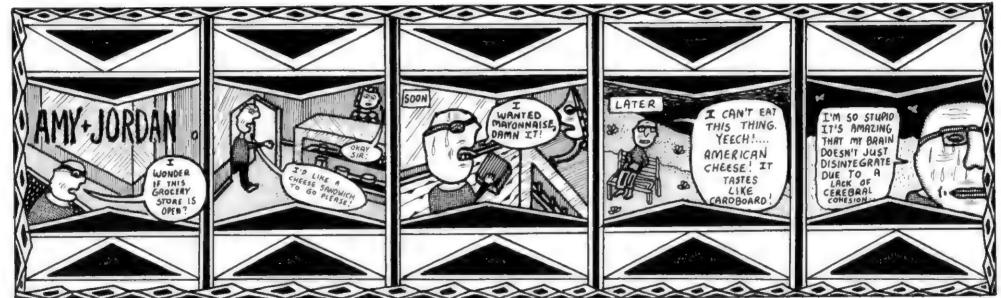




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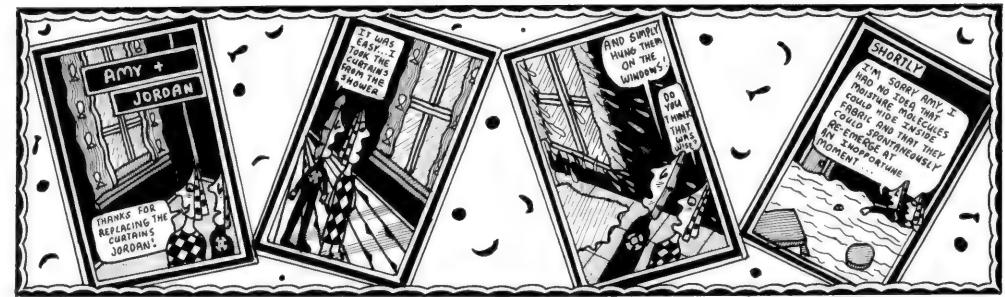
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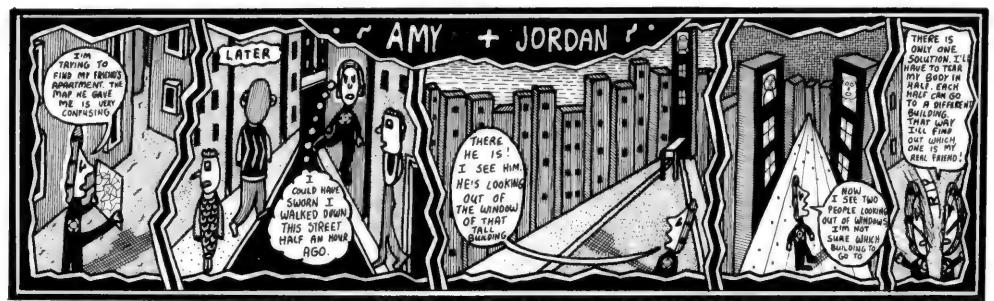
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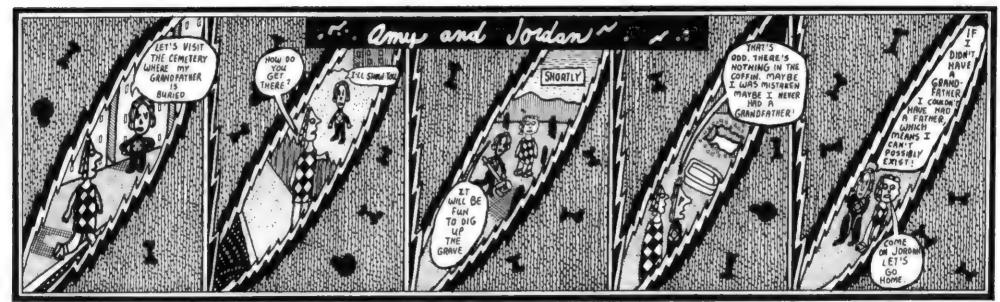


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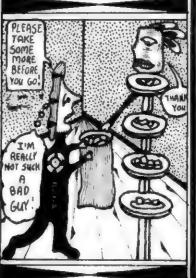




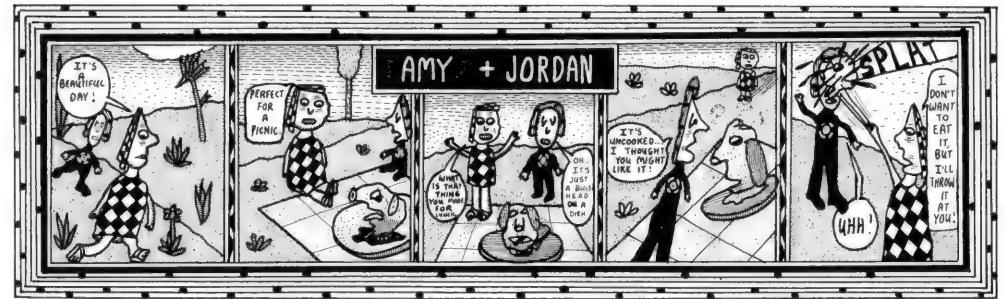
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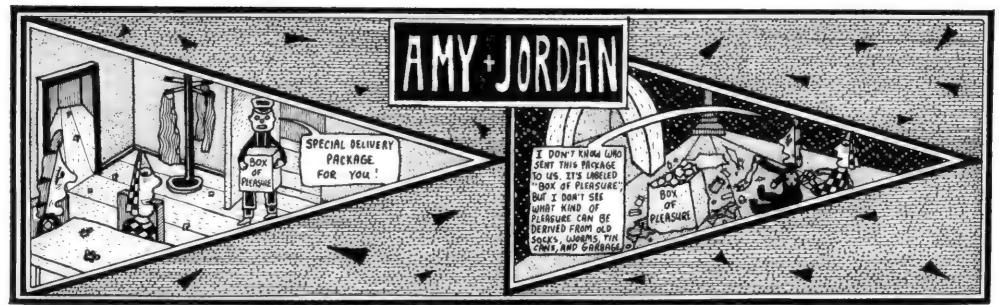


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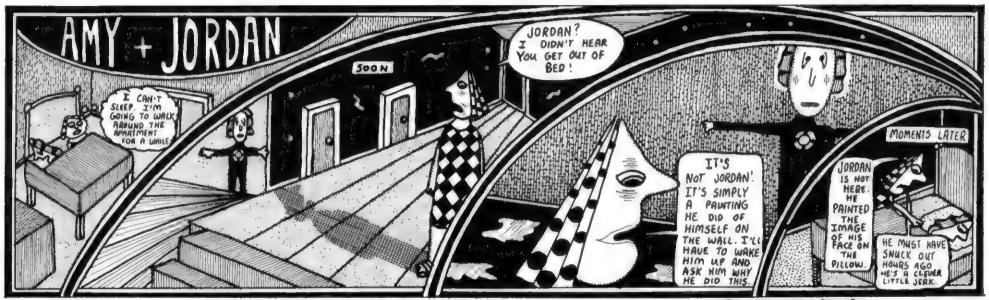




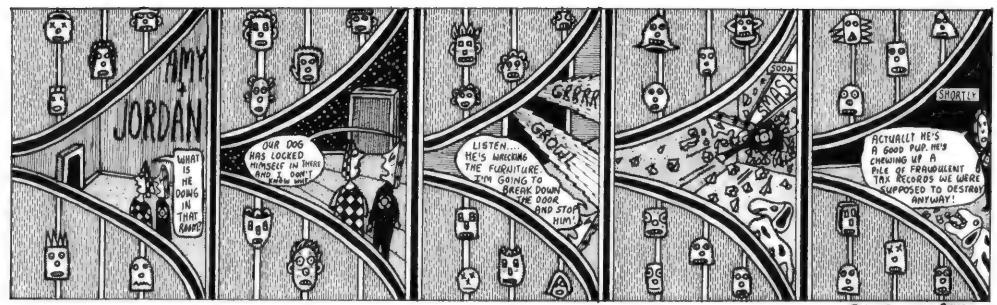
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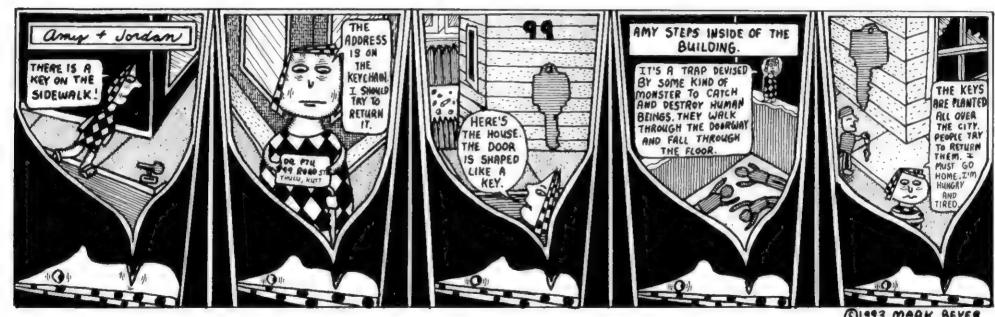
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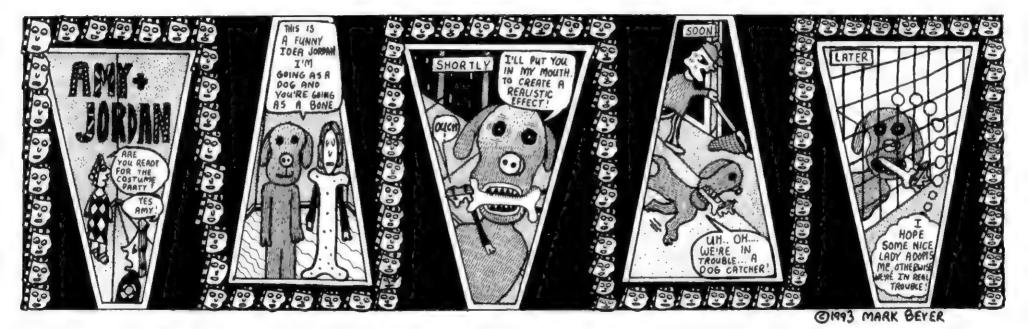
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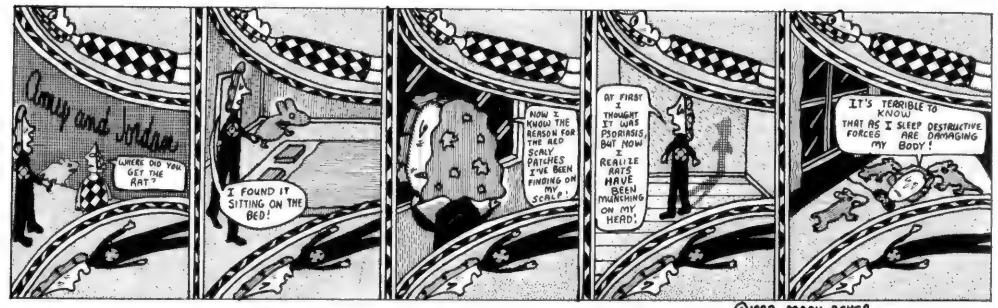


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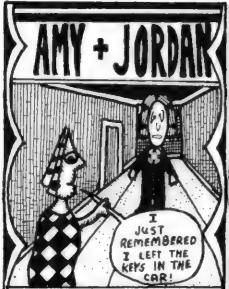


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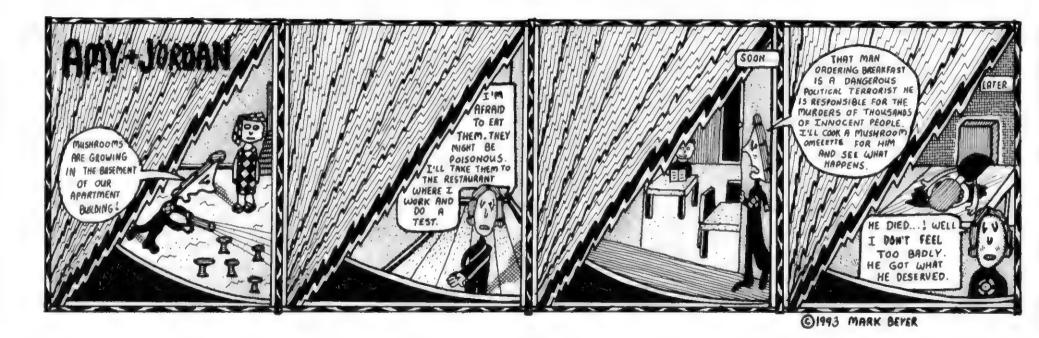


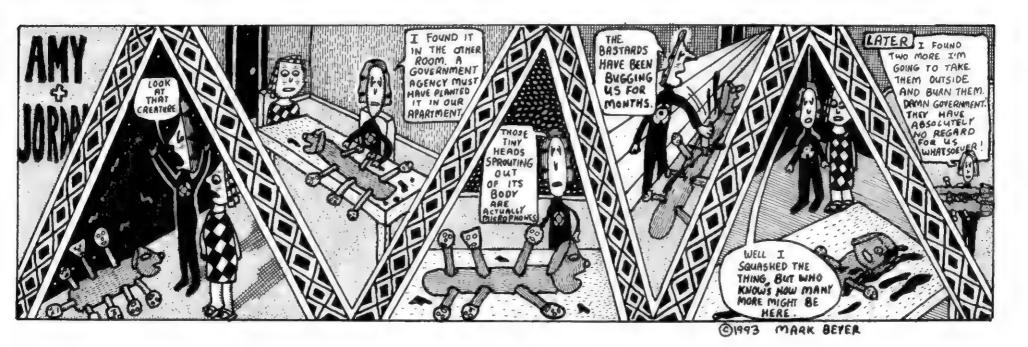


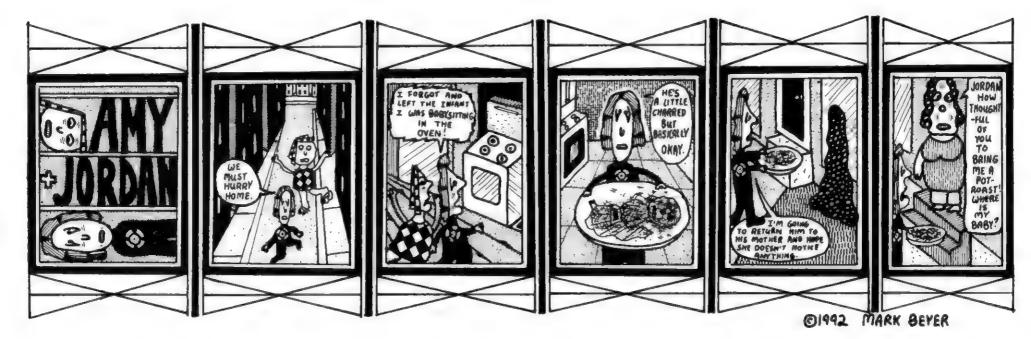


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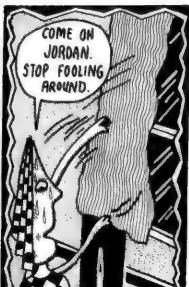


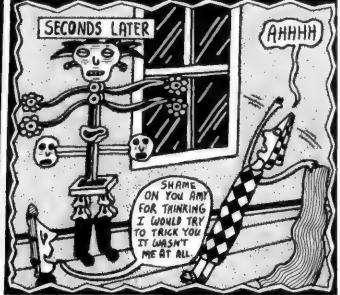




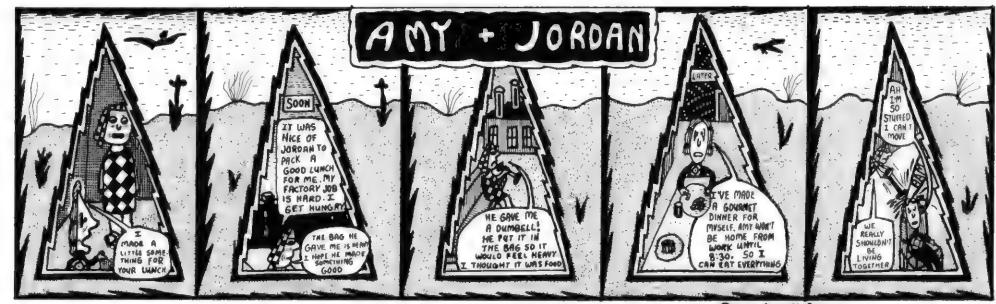




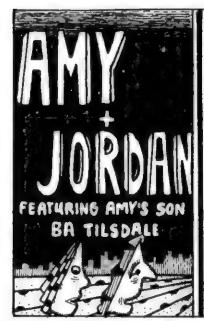


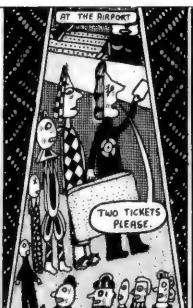


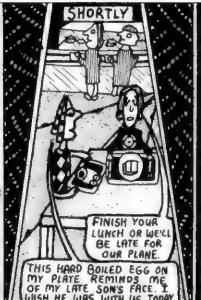
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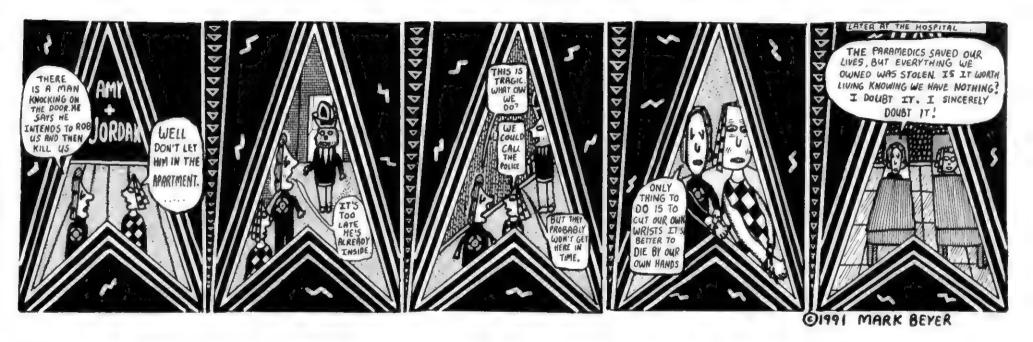




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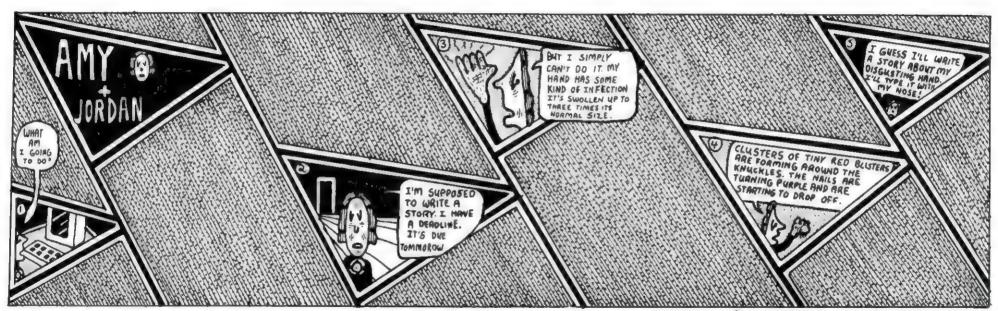








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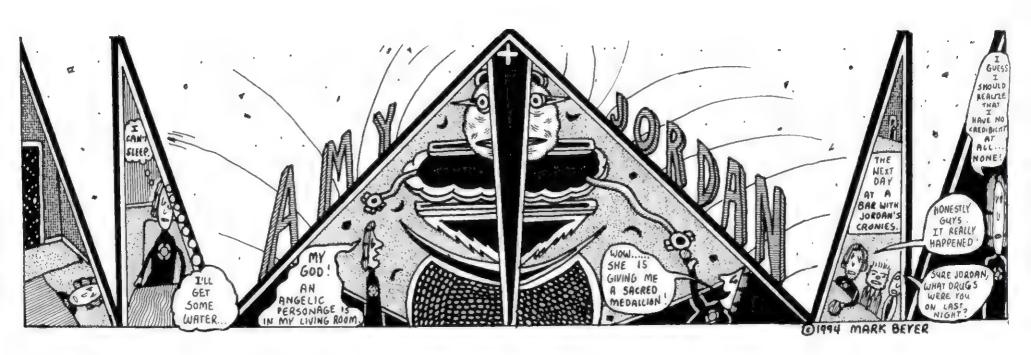


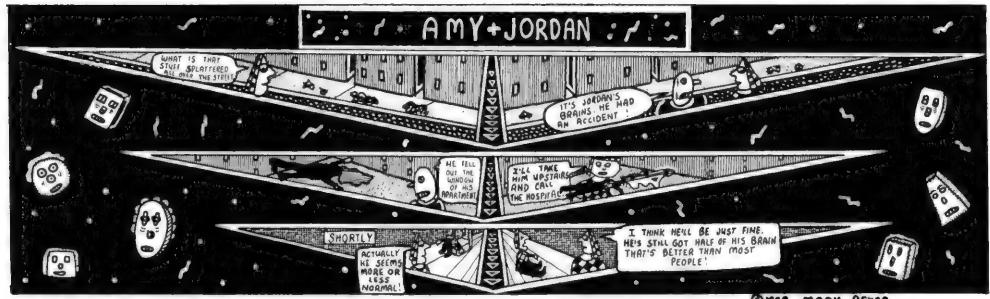




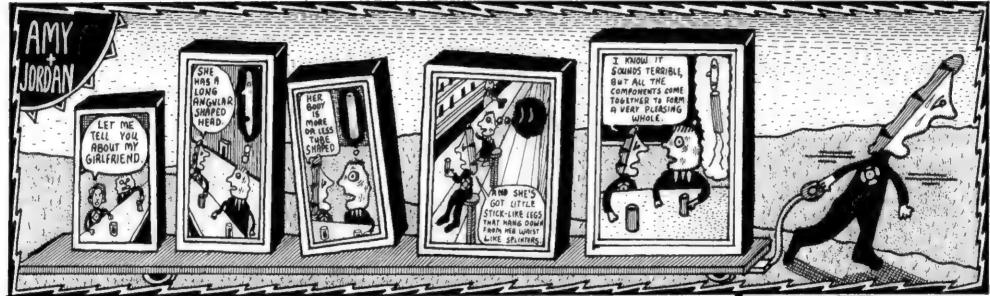


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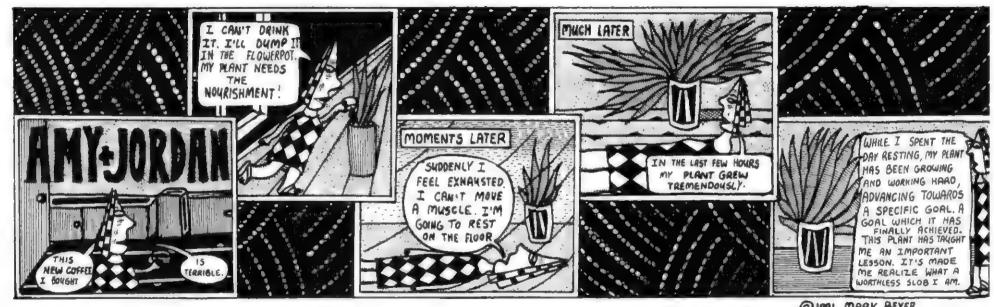




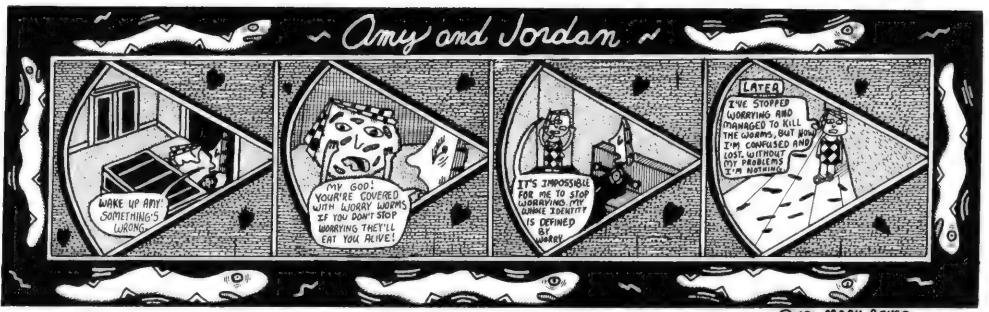
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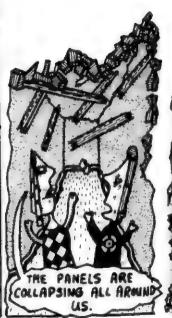


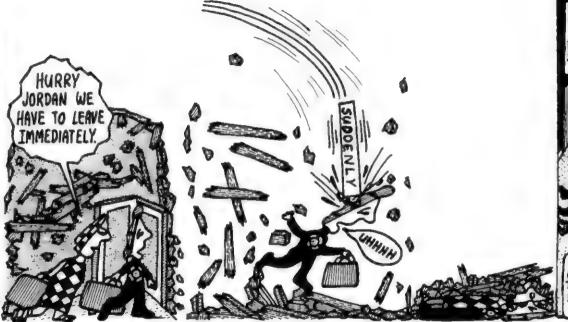
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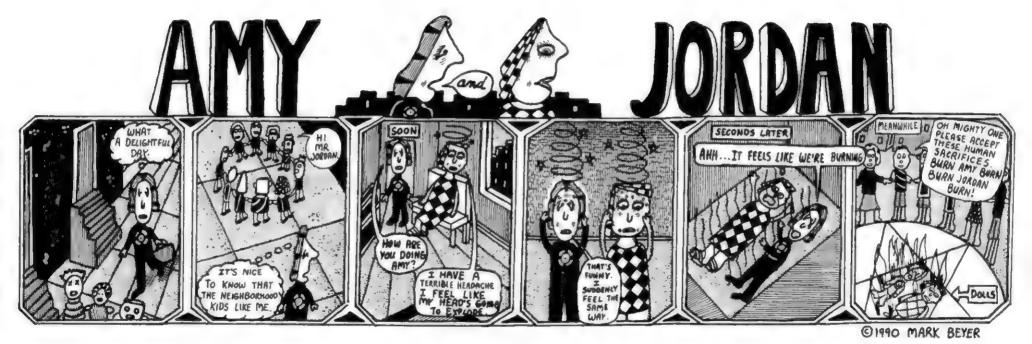
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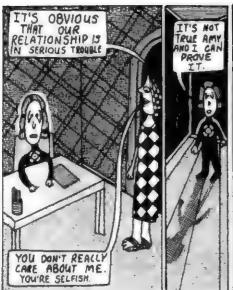


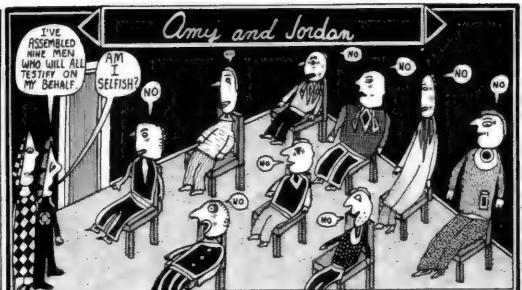
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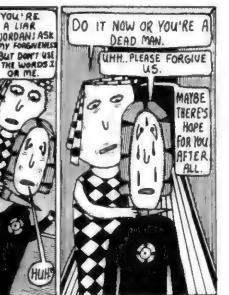




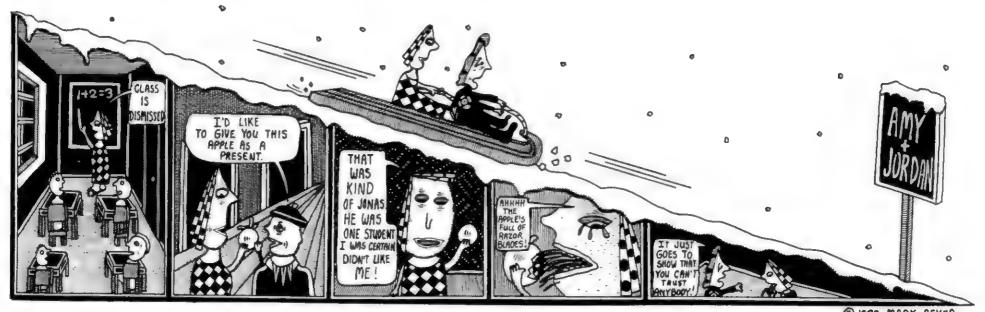




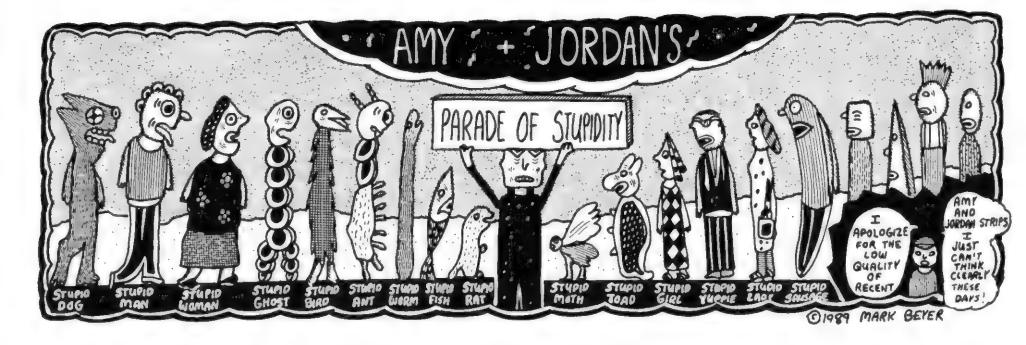


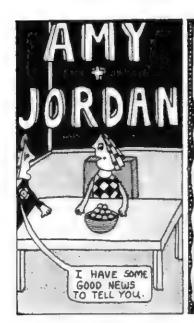


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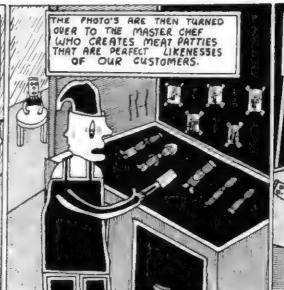


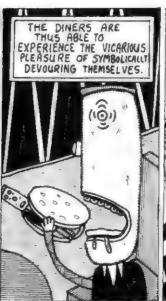
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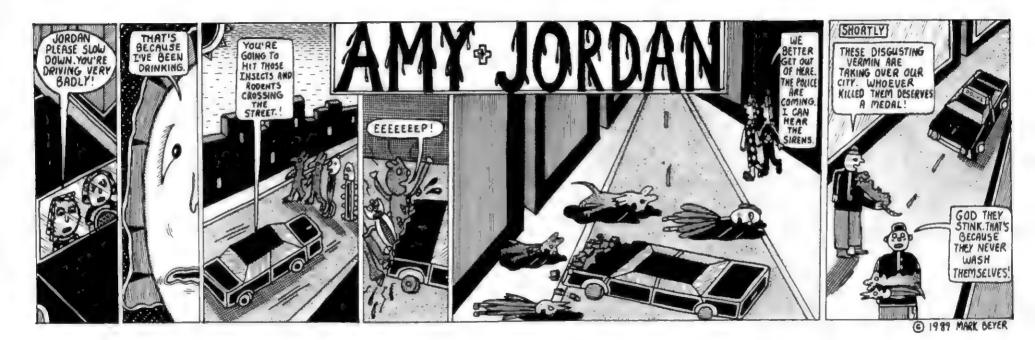








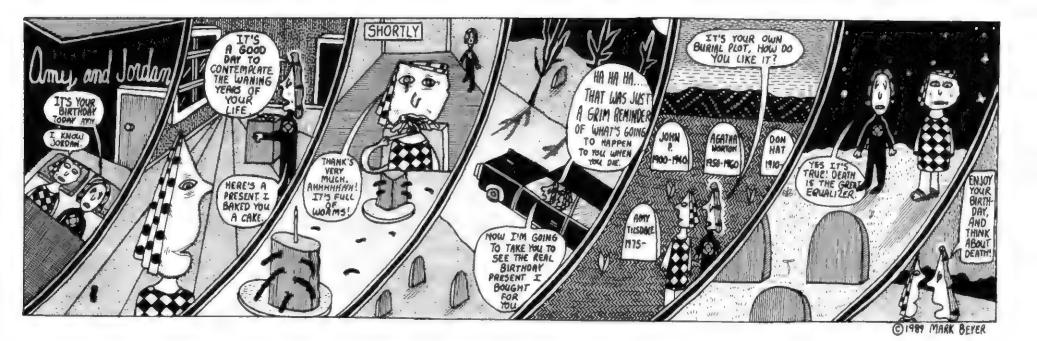
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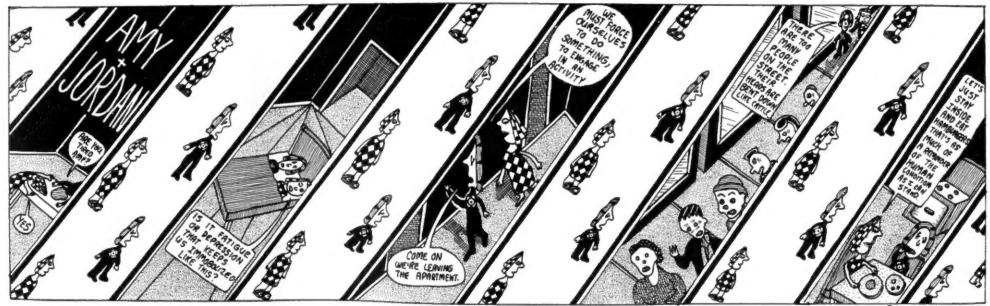




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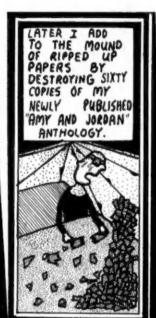


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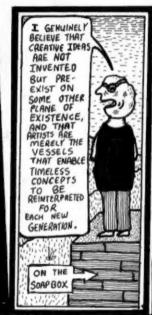














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